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The Future of Religion

By Abbé Ernest Dimnet

The author of "The Art of Thinking," a distinguished churchman, in this unusual presentation of the Catholic point of view finds the forms of religion ever changing but its essence ever the same.

We will wonder about the future. And not merely, in a narrow egotistical way, about the future contingencies of our private existence, but about the possible transformations of life on our planet. Even the least reflective of us find pleasure in listening to anticipations: what sort of houses will our descendants occupy in 2500? how will they be decorated? how lighted, heated, and cooled? Will atomic force be released by that time and will it actually perform the miracles we imagine? Will wireless telephony really become a household affair so that by fumbling with three or four buttons on the arm of our chair we shall be able to talk with our friend in China as if he were in the next room? And will our automobiles be regarded by the people of that day as we regard the Merovingian chariot?

Again, will medicine find methods of rejuvenation which will make longevity a matter of course? And by a rapid succession of "new deals" will leisure and the possibilities of enjoying leisure be within the reach of us all? Will the incredibly youthful old men thus produced be really wise, or will they remain undeveloped as too many of our leisured friends who still play tennis at seventy unfortunately seem to be? What will be the definition of a gentleman?

What will be the future of nations? How we would like to see a map of the world of the year 2500! Will the United States become more and more unified or will the forces we now see at work, ratified by unforeseen agreements, give some sort of autonomy to the East, the Middle West, and the West? May not the English language as spoken at that date sound as different from what it now is as the English of Chaucer?

How far will science have progressed? Will the astronomer know the history of the universe as consecutively as the geologist knows that of the earth? Will philosophy have advanced from the condition of a state of mind expressing itself in a special vocabulary, to a universal background bringing mankind nearer the ultimate realities? Will man be clearer about spirituality, free will, and immortality than he is today apart from the religious solutions? It is here that the other question of what will have become of religion appears inevitable.

But we need not wait six hundred years; the question, what is becoming of religion, is heard every day; it is discussed by undergraduates in college clubs, and it is a renewed surprise for me every year to see it forced on public attention in the popular press of America in a language which the average reader cannot but find extremely misleading.

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Many people are timid, diffident, and traditional and would rather not be teased by curiosity about religion, but they cannot escape the note of interrogation. They profess to be believers, yet their belief is not deep enough, or broad enough to face difficulties or visualize probable changes. They do not dare look the facts in the face. Some are men and women with sensitive consciences who dread the possibility of blasphemy. Many are utilitarians who more or less definitely think of religion as a useful factor in business or in the family life and do not wish to jeopardize it by intellectual adventurousness. There are many such in our Latin countries. They are shocked when told that, contrary to their grandfathers who were believers but did not practise religion, they now go to church without believing in the Church, but it is so: all they want is moral stability as a bulwark to business stability.

Other people wonder about the future of religion curiously but nervously. They are like mountain climbers with a poor sense of balance, who insist on looking down precipices. Others again have an unsuspected or a long-repressed tendency to doubt, which the freedom of the language of today suddenly liberates. Many have had the cruel misfortune of suffering from religion, or from religious people—literary proofs of this need not be recalled—or they mix up religion with so-called religious people and find relief in seeing the whole fabric in whose shadow they have lived shaken to its foundations. Others, superficially but uncomfortably, belong to all these categories: they make up the thousands who go to debates on the existence of God without quite knowing on which side they will be: their faces, during those debates, are a study and to a keen observer tell the whole history of their lives, but they are too unprepared to come to definite conclusions and only leave the hall ready for another debate, that is to say another stage of uncertainty.

A few—to whom Mrs. Browning's definition of philosophy as "sympathy with God" would well apply—feel certain that the future of religion is secure and only pray that not too many will die before their certitude becomes universal. To them outward modifications in rites or formulas do not matter and the excitement or the triumphant delight with which they are pointed out by the scoffer disturb them but little. They are equally remote from the ignorance which clamors that nothing in religion ever changes and from the superficiality which decides that if anything in religion does change religion is found out and can henceforth be dispensed with.

Finally there are those who, from a strictly scientific study of history, have become used to the notion of a perpetual flux but whose imagination takes pleasure in visualizing the procedure of the changes. Such people are especially interested in religious modifications from a natural reaction against the almost universal belief that modifications should not be expected in that domain. They know that the manifestations of religious sentiment vary constantly under psychological influences which sometimes do their work invisibly, sometimes produce landslides like the Greek Schism or the Reformation, and they are on the look-out for developments. I know several who watch with intense curiosity the effects of the so-called reconciliation between the Pope and Italy. The administration of the Catholic Church is still largely Italianized, a legacy of the not far away days when the Pope, much more obviously than today, was one of the Italian sovereigns. What will be the effect on that body of Italian prelates of constant and friendly intercourse with the young, robust, and highly magnetic Rome of Mussolini? The perspective opened to the imagination by that question is exceptionally rich. When the observer is a sincere Catholic he is not disturbed by any possibility; when he is not he applies to this case the ordinary canons of the philosophy of history. His mind, as well as that of his colleague, is working scientifically. This type of intellectual alone has a right to speculate about what people call the future of religion. And let it be made clear at once that by the word religion is here meant only what the current language thus designates, viz., the outward manifestations of the religious sentiment, the life of religious bodies. Religion proper is something deeper and need not be prophesied about by history. Philosophy at this point has to step in with its oft-defeated effort to give an adequate definition of religion and the whole question of the future of religion is transposed to a different plane. In other words the question, what is the future of religion? has to be answered first by the historian and next by the philosopher, or, even better, by a philosopher well acquainted with history.

The stone of scandal at the present day still seems to be what it was, sixty years ago, to the readers of Draper. There are changes in religion as in everything else, *ergo* religion is not apart from other human manifestations and must, like them, some day come to an end.

Religious teaching is largely responsible for the frequency of this poor reasoning: if the teaching were braver and more thorough, people, instead of being shocked by religious development, would expect it, for it takes place before their very eyes. A man's short lifetime has been enough to show us the Church of England rejuvenated by the Oxford movement as it had been, during the preceding century, by Wesley's devotion; Judaism transformed by a reform the magnitude of which the translation of the Saturday services to Sunday does not even begin to indicate; finally, Uni-

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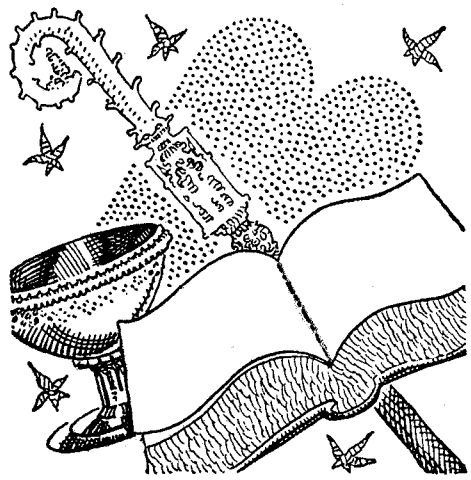
tarianism, after moving farther and farther away from dogma, unexpectedly wanting a communion service added to its own.

I know in the country, in the North of France, a simple old woman, an innocent soul, who says sometimes with a smile from which a little wistfulness is not absent: *"tout change, dans la religion comme dans le reste."* She means that the bells are no longer rung as they were when she was a child; that French priests no longer wear the *rabat;* that they try, no matter how ineffectually, to pronounce Latin as the Italians do; and that the Little Flower has displaced Saint Joseph in the popular devotion. The notion of change in what she calls religion has forced itself upon her, surprising a little, no doubt, but not exactly disturbing her.



Catholics who travel, instead of being immovably rooted, like this old woman, in a small community, experience harder shocks. Many of them who regard abstinence from meat on Friday as of equal importance with attendance at mass on Sunday stare when they see Spanish priests apparently breaking an inviolable rule. A dear friend of mine in New York was explaining in my presence to her children's governess, a French Protestant, that one great satisfaction in Catholicism was always to be sure to hear the same service, from whatever country the priest came. I had to explain that mass is celebrated in many languages besides Latin and according to rites which make it unrecognizable except to what Cicero calls "a learned eye." The very same morning I had attended the mass of a Chaldean priest who, according to the altar-boy's rather disgusted description, "said mass backward," *i.e.,* with his face more frequently than his back turned to the congregation. My explanations, after causing considerable excitement, finally created serenity and only the slightest rise of the eyebrows greeted the additional information that a Dominican does not say mass exactly like a Jesuit.

Protestants as well as the average Catholic regard clerical celibacy as so distinctly Catholic that this rule—which is mere discipline and could be altered like those determining the date of Easter—seems to them to belong to the very essence of Catholicism. A trip to the East dispels the idea, but a voyage is not necessary. In fact there are in America thousands of Catholic emigrants who have known at home only married clergymen. When I was at school there used to be in the theological seminary, next door, Greek students who, a few months before ordination, went home to be married and returned in order to be ordained afterward. This ought to have surprised us. It did not, although not one of us would have wished to see this discipline reintroduced into the Latin Church. We realized that such a detail cannot have the least bearing on the essence of Catholicism, much less on the essence of Christianity. It is only when such facts are revealed too late, after the dogma of uniformity has been built on a foundation of misinformation, that they can shock and sometimes hurt.

Readers of Church history know that much more than abstinence rites or celibacy might come up to upset minds unprepared for the idea of strange vicissitudes in the life of religious communities. Imagine the dismay of many Catholics if they were told that a time might come when two Popes would be elected simultaneously instead of one. Yet this is what happened in the fourteenth century and lasted seventy years without causing decisive damage to the Church. Or, if they were told that the election, under very unfavorable conditions, of a Pope not yet in his teens is not an impossibility, since it happened in the past and did not strike the people of that age as a proof that the Church was doomed to destruction. Here again nothing approximates even a threat to the essence of Catholicism.

Christology which certainly is at the very core of the essence of Christianity requires the most careful study to be properly understood and evidences the law of development as well as other articles in the creed. There was a time when the term "Mother of God," applied to the Blessed Virgin, sounded to many as irreverent as if we spoke of Saint Ann today as the grandmother of God. When the Christian missionaries whose fascinating story we read in *Acts* said to the Greeks that all that was required of them was to believe that Christ was the Son of God and to be baptized in His name, they were using a phrase which later theological creeds were to adopt, but in a much simpler sense. All this has to be borne in mind when we wish to realize what is vital in religion and what is only apparently so. Mistakes are easy. I frequently meet with non-Catholics who regard the Papacy as central in the Catholic system and ascribe to it the stability which many of them—disturbed by the uncertainties too visible in Protestant communities—seem to envy. They are right, of course, and the doctrine of apostolic succession is essential. But to ignore that Catholic life consists largely of belief in the presence of Christ in the Eucharist is to miss what gives it

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its real character and its extraordinary attraction. Essentials which ought to be visible to the most cursory inspection seem, on the contrary, to be perceptible only to exceptional powers.

To conclude: there have been in the past and there will no doubt be in the future innumerable religious transformations which however will be in the line of a legitimate development and will never affect the essense of Christianity. Even in the most advanced sections of liberal Protestantism enough belief in Christ subsists for many of their adherents passionately to claim their right to being called Christians. As liberalism has long exhausted the destructive power of its analysis there is no reason to suppose that Christianity will ever be in worse difficulties than those it has weathered in the past, and to wonder about its future is idle speculation.

As for the future of "religion," that is to say the religious feeling, to worry about it is as unnecessary as to worry about the future of poetry or the future of love. The moods of poetry and the "climates" of love may vary indefinitely, but their human sources remain what they have always been. To be frank, the expression "the future of religion" belongs distinctly to the vocabulary of the uneducated. What is meant is the future of institutional religions, and the least effort at analysis shows that they are only the garment of an instinct as primitive as life itself.

I hear you say: "No! What is meant by 'the future of religion' is something simpler, based on a mere fact. The thousands who use the phrase only mean that science has eliminated religion and that this appears already in the national life of countries like Russia and Turkey, Brazil and Mexico as it appears in the private lives of Ethicals. We only wonder how far this movement will go and whether the number of believers will not go on decreasing so that it will become negligible."

Let me point out that numbers have no importance whatever in questions of this order. There was a time when Christianity was only the religion of a handful of men. Yet it was full of significance. It would be the same thing if Catholicism were reduced to one chapel served by a priest who would be his own Pope: the same religious life would go on in this shrunken community. As a matter of fact, religion, true religion, has always belonged to a minority; the study even of the thirteenth century leaves no doubt of that and people who repeat, without much conviction, that it takes a talent to be religious express a profound truth. Religion like poetry belongs to the humblest and the least gifted, but it does require a talent to give them a noticeable form. However, you must not judge by what you see in your own narrow circle or by wholesale affirmations which require considerable qualifications. If you speak of Russia and Turkey, you might also speak of Germany and Italy where the contrary phenomenon is taking place. Anti-clericalism in France is, in spite of a Radical government, a thing of the past: religion here, which used to be a habit of old men, after long being one of old women, is now apparent in the life of millions of young men.

"But Russia!"

Everything in Russia will be affected by the outcome of the political and economical experiment. Fifteen years is not much in the history of a nation. But you may observe that the whole life of the Russian people is more of a mysticism, fuller of idealism and devotion than ever. A vision of a brilliant future seems to be the cause, but that vision would be ineffective if Russians were not predisposed to their patriotic idealism by the enormous capital of religious mysticism bequeathed to them. To judge a religionless country we should need several generations. The same can be said of the "ethical" families we know. They are—that is to say, they think themselves—purely ethical as long as their legacy of latent religion lasts them. No sooner is that exhausted than problems appear and religion once more looms in the background or returns in full force.

"But science!"

Oh! I had hoped you would not speak of that again. Your clock is alarmingly slow. You say science when you mean poor old forgotten Haeckel. The Eddingtons of today, with the one exception of Einstein who does not seem interested, all incline toward theism and say so pretty forcibly. Have you read Bergson's latest book? Read it: it is the clearest and easiest he has ever written. Here is the son of a Jewish family, educated in the most secular atmosphere and living the most beautiful life of an independent thinker. At the end of fifty years he comes out with religious conclusions and a haunting tendency to mysticism. That is what *science* has done.

"But people do not know that, and surely religion is going."

Let it, if it is what most people wrongly regard as religion. What is going is a *superannuated conception of God* which ought not to have survived under Christianity. As soon as ministers are so educated that they can make a truer conception of God as popular as the deplorable old one used to be, and as soon as the problem of Good begins to intrigue mankind as the problem of Evil has intrigued it so far, nobody will hear a mention of the future of religion again. Religion will be consciously, what it is now only unconsciously, part and parcel of our thought and life.

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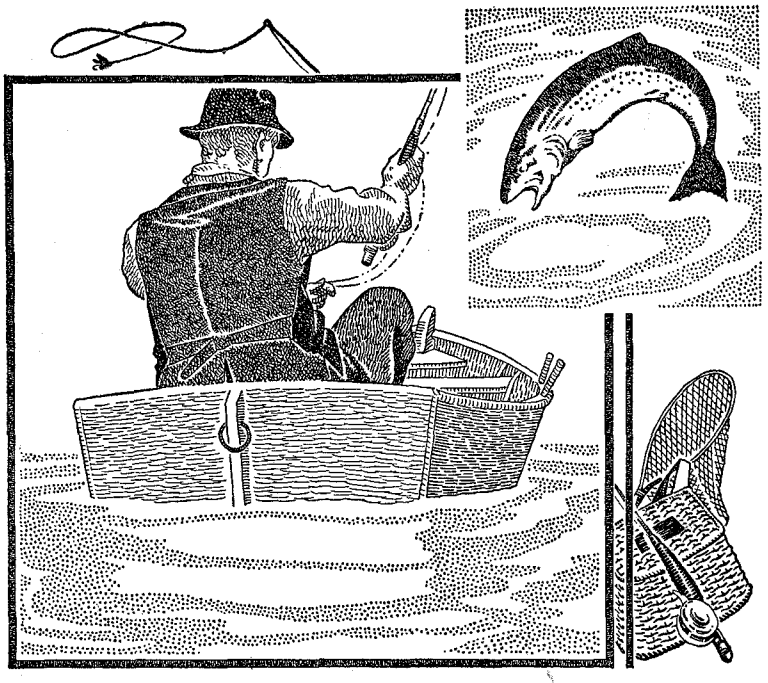
Old Red

A STORY

By Caroline Gordon



WHEN the door had closed behind his daughter Mister Maury went to the window and stood a few moments looking out. The roses that had grown in a riot all along that side of the fence had died or been cleared away but the sun lay across the garden in the same level lances of light that he remembered. He turned back into the room. The shadows had gathered until it was nearly all in gloom. The top of his minnow bucket just emerging from the duffel-bag glinted in the last rays of the sun. He stood looking down at his traps all gathered neatly in a heap at the foot of the bed. He would leave them like that. Even if they came in here sweeping and cleaning up—it was only in hotels that a man was master of his own room—even if they came in here cleaning up he would tell them to leave all his things exactly as they were. It was reassuring to see them all there together, ready to be taken up in the hand, to be carried down and put into a car, to be driven off to some railroad station at a moment's notice.

As he moved toward the door he spoke aloud, a habit that was growing on him:

"Anyhow I won't stay but a week. . . . I ain't going to stay but a week, no matter what they say. . . ."

Downstairs in the dining-room they were already gathered at the supper table, his white-haired, shrunken mother-in-law, his tall sister-in-law who had the proud carriage of the head, the aquiline nose, but not the spirit of his dead wife, his lean, blond new son-in-law, his black-eyed daughter who, but that she was thin, looked so much like him, all of them gathered there waiting for him, Alexander Maury. It occurred to him that this was the first time he had sat down in the bosom of the family for some years. They were always writing saying that he must make a visit this summer or certainly next fall . . . "all had a happy Christmas together but missed you. . . ." They had even made the pretext that he ought to come up to inspect his new son-in-law. As if he hadn't always known exactly the kind of young man Sarah would marry! What was the boy's name? Stephen, yes, Stephen. He must be sure and remember that.

He sat down and shaking out his napkin spread it over his capacious paunch and tucked it well up under his chin in the way his wife had never allowed him to do. He let his eyes rove over the table and released a long sigh.

"Hot batter bread," he said, "and ham. Merry Point ham. I sure am glad to taste them one more time before I die."

The old lady was sending the little Negro girl scurrying back to the kitchen for a hot plate of batter bread. He pushed aside the cold plate and waited. She had bridled when he spoke of the batter bread and a faint flush had dawned on her withered cheeks. Vain she had always been as a peacock, of her housekeeping, her children, the animals on her place, anything that belonged to her. And she went on, even at her advanced age, making her batter bread, smoking her hams according to that old recipe she was so proud of, but who came here now to this old house to eat or to praise?

He helped himself to a generous slice of batter bread, buttered it, took the first mouthful and chewed it slowly. He shook his head.

"There ain't anything like it," he said. "There ain't anything else like it in this world."

His dark eye roving the table fell on his son-in-law. "You like batter bread?" he enquired.

Stephen nodded, smiling. Mister Maury, still masticating slowly, regarded his face, measured the space between the eyes—his favorite test for man, horse, or dog. Yes, there was room enough for sense between the eyes. But how young the boy looked! And infected already

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with the fatal germ, the *kakoëthes scribendi*. Well, their children would probably escape. It was like certain diseases of the eye, skipped every other generation. His own father had had it badly all his life. He could see him now sitting at the head of the table spouting his own poetry—or Shakespeare's—while the children watched the preserve dish to see if it was going around. He, Aleck Maury, had been lucky to be born in the generation he had. He had escaped that at least. A few translations from Heine in his courting days, a few fragments from the Greek, but no, he had kept clear of that on the whole. . . .

The eyes of his sister-in-law were fixed on him. She was smiling faintly. "You don't look much like dying, Aleck. Florida must agree with you."

The old lady spoke from the head of the table. "I can't see what you do with yourself all winter long. Doesn't time hang heavy on your hands?"

Time, he thought, *time!* They were always mouthing the word and what did they know about it? Nothing in God's world! He saw time suddenly, a dull, leaden-colored fabric depending from the old lady's hands, from the hands of all of them, a blanket that they pulled about, now this way, now that, trying to cover up their nakedness. Or they would cast it on the ground and creep in among the folds, finding one day a little more tightly rolled than another, but all of it everywhere the same dull gray substance. But time was a banner that whipped before him always in the wind. He stood on tiptoe to catch at the bright folds, to strain them to his bosom. They were bright and glittering. But they whipped by so fast and were whipping always ever faster. The tears came into his eyes. Where, for instance, had this year gone? He could swear he had not wasted a minute of it for no man living, he thought, knew better how to make each day a pleasure to him. Not a minute wasted and yet here it was already May! If he lived to the Biblical three score and ten which was all he ever allowed himself in his calculations he had before him only nine more Mays. Only nine more Mays out of all eternity and they wanted him to waste one of them sitting on the front porch at Merry Point!

The butter plate which had seemed to swim in a glittering mist was coming solidly to rest upon the white tablecloth. He winked his eyes rapidly and laying down his knife and fork squared himself about in his chair to address his mother-in-law:

"Well, ma'am, you know I'm a man that always likes to be learning something. Now this year I learned how to smell out fish." He glanced around the table, holding his head high and allowing his well-cut nostrils to flutter slightly with his indrawn breaths. "Yes sir," he said, "I'm probably the only white man in this country knows how to smell out feesh."

There was a discreet smile on the faces of the others. Sarah was laughing outright. "Did you have to learn how or did it just come to you?" she asked.

"I learned it from an old nigger woman," her father said. He shook his head reminiscently. "It's wonderful how much you can learn from niggers. But you have to know how to handle them. I was half the winter wooing that old Fanny. . . ."

He waited until their laughter had died down. "We used to start off every morning from the same little cove and we'd drift in there together at night. I noticed how she always brought in a good string so I says to her 'Fanny, you just lemme go 'long with you.' But she wouldn't have nothing to do with me. I saw she was going to be a hard nut to crack but I kept right on. Finally I began giving her presents. . . ."

Laura was regarding him fixedly, a queer look on her face.

"What sort of presents did you give her, Aleck?"

He made his tones hearty in answer. "I give her a fine string of fish one day and I give her fifty cents. And finally I made her a present of a Barlow knife. That was when she broke down. She took me with her that morning. . . ."

"Could she really *smell* fish?" the old lady asked curiously.

"You ought to a seen her," Mister Maury said. "She'd sail over that lake like a hound on the scent. She'd row right along and then all of a sudden she'd stop rowing." He bent over, wrinkling his nose and peering into the depths of imaginary water. "'Thar they are, White Folks, thar they are. Cain't you smell 'em?'"

Stephen was leaning forward, eyeing his father-in-law intently. "Could you?" he asked.

"I got so I could smell feesh," Mister Maury told him, "I could smell out the feesh but I couldn't tell which kind they were. Now Fanny could row over a bed and tell just by the smell whether it was bass or bream. But she'd been at it all her life." He paused, sighing. "You can't just pick these things up. You have to give yourself to them. Who was it said 'Genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains'?"

Sarah was rising briskly. Her eyes sought her husband's across the table. She was still laughing. "Sir Izaak Walton," she said, "we'd better go in the other room. Mandy wants to clear the table."

The two older ladies remained in the dining-room. Mister Maury walked across the hall to the sitting-room, accompanied by Steve and Sarah. He lowered himself cautiously into the most solid-looking of the rocking-chairs that were drawn up around the fire. Steve was standing on the hearthrug, back to the fire, gazing abtractedly off across the room.

Mister Maury glanced up at him curiously. "What you thinking about, feller?" he asked.

Steve looked down. He smiled but his gaze was still

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contemplative. "I was thinking about the sonnet," he said, "in the form in which it first came to England."

Mister Maury shook his head. "Wyatt and Surry," he said, "Hey, nonny, nonny . . . You'll have hardening of the liver long before you're my age." He looked past Steve's shoulder at the picture that hung over the mantelshelf: Cupid and Psyche holding between them a fluttering veil and running along a rocky path towards the beholder. "Old Merry Point," he said, "it don't change much, does it?"

He settled himself more solidly in his chair. His mind veered from the old house to his own wanderings in brighter places. He regarded his daughter and son-in-law affably.

"Yes, sir," he said, "this winter in Florida was valuable to me just for the acquaintances I made. Take my friend, Jim Barbee. Just to live in the same hotel with that man is an education." He paused, smiling reminiscently into the fire. "I'll never forget the first time I saw him. He came up to me there in the lobby of the hotel. 'Professor Maury!' he says, 'you been hearin' about me for twenty years and I been hearin' about you for twenty years. And now we've done met!' "

Sarah had sat down in the little rocking-chair by the fire. She leaned towards him now, laughing. "They ought to have put down a cloth of gold for the meeting," she said.

Mister Maury shook his head. "Nature does that in Florida," he said. "I knew right off the reel it was him. There were half a dozen men standing around. I made 'em witness. 'Jim Barbee,' I says, 'Jim Barbee of Maysville or I'll eat my hat!' "

"Why is he so famous?" Sarah asked.

Mister Maury took out his knife and cut off a plug of tobacco. When he had offered a plug to his son-in-law and it had been refused he put the plug back in his pocket. "He's a man of imagination," he said slowly. "There ain't many in this world."

He took a small tin box out of his pocket and set it on the little table that held the lamp. Removing the top he tilted the box so that they could see its contents: an artificial lure, a bug with a dark body and a red, bulbous head, a hook protruding from what might be considered its vitals.

"Look at her," he said, "ain't she a killer?"

Sarah leaned forward to look and Steve, still standing on the hearthrug bent above them. The three heads ringed the light. Mister Maury disregarded Sarah and addressed himself to Steve. "She takes nine strips of rind," he said, "nine strips cut just thick enough." He marked off the width of the strips with his two fingers on the table, then picking up the lure and cupping it in his palm he moved it back and forth quickly so that the painted eyes caught the light.

"Look at her," he said, "look at the wicked way she sets forward."

Sarah was poking at the lure with the tip of her finger. "Wanton," she said, "simply wanton. What does he call her?"

"This is his Devil Bug," Mister Maury said. "He's the only man in this country makes it. I myself had the idea thirty years ago and let it slip by me the way I do with so many of my ideas." He sighed, then elevating his tremendous bulk slightly above the table level and continuing to hold Steve with his gaze he produced from his coat pocket the oilskin book that held his flies. He spread it open on the table and began to turn the pages. His eyes sought his son-in-law's as his hand paused before a gray, rather draggled-looking lure.

"Old Speck," he said, "I've had that fly for twenty years. I reckon she's taken five hundred pounds of fish in her day. . . ."

The fire burned lower. A fiery coal rolled from the grate and fell onto the hearthrug. Sarah scooped it up with a shovel and threw it among the ashes. In the circle of the lamplight the two men still bent over the table looking at the flies. Steve was absorbed in them but he spoke seldom. It was her father's voice that rising and falling filled the room. He talked a great deal but he had a beautiful speaking voice. He was telling Steve now about Little West Fork, the first stream ever he put a fly in. "My first love," he kept calling it. It sounded rather pretty, she thought, in his mellow voice. "My first love. . . ."

II

When Mister Maury came downstairs the next morning the dining-room was empty except for his daughter, Sarah, who sat dawdling over a cup of coffee and a cigarette. Mister Maury sat down opposite her. To the little Negro girl who presented herself at his elbow he outlined his wants briefly: "A cup of coffee and some hot batter bread just like we had last night." He turned to his daughter. "Where's Steve?"

"He's working," she said, "he was up at eight and he's been working ever since."

Mister Maury accepted the cup of coffee from the little girl, poured half of it into his saucer, set it aside to

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cool. "Ain't it wonderful," he said, "the way a man can sit down and work day after day? When I think of all the work I've done in my time. . . . Can he work *every* morning?"

"He sits down at his desk every morning," she said, "but of course he gets more done some mornings than others."

Mister Maury picked up his saucer, found the coffee cool enough for his taste. He sipped it slowly, looking out of the window. His mind was already busy with his day's program. No water—no running water—nearer than West Fork three miles away. He couldn't drive a car and Steve was going to be busy writing all morning. There was nothing for it but a pond. The Willow Sink. It was not much but it was better than nothing. He pushed his chair back and rose.

"Well," he said, "I'd better be starting."

When he came downstairs with his rod a few minutes later the hall was still full of the sound of measured typing. Sarah sat in the dining-room in the same position in which he had left her, smoking. Mister Maury paused in the doorway while he slung his canvas bag over his shoulders. "How you ever going to get anything done if you don't take advantage of the morning hours?" he asked. He glanced at the door opposite as if it had been the entrance to a sick chamber. "What's he writing about?" he enquired in a whisper.

"It's an essay on John Skelton."

Mister Maury looked out at the new green leaves framed in the doorway. "John Skelton," he said, "God Almighty!"

He went through the hall and stepped down off the porch on to the ground that was still moist with spring rains. As he crossed the lower yard he looked up into the branches of the maples. Yes, the leaves were full grown already even on the late trees. The year, how swiftly, how steadily it advanced! He had come to the far corner of the yard. Grown up it was in poke-berry shoots and honeysuckle but there was a place to get through. The top strand of wire had been pulled down and fastened to the others with a ragged piece of rope. He rested his weight on his good leg and swung himself over on to the game one. It gave him a good, sharp twinge when he came down on it. It was getting worse all the time, that leg, but on the other hand he was learning better all the time how to handle it. His mind flew back to a dark, startled moment, that day when the cramp first came on him. He had been sitting still in the boat all day long and that evening when he had stood up to get out his leg had failed him utterly. He had pitched forward among the reeds, had lain there a second, face downwards, before it came to him what had happened. With the realization came a sharp picture out of his faraway youth: Uncle Quent lowering himself ponderously out of the saddle after a hard day's hunting had fallen forward in exactly the same way, into a knot of yowling little Negroes. He had got up and cursed them all out of the lot. It had scared the old boy to death, coming down like that. The black dog he had had on his shoulder all that fall. But he himself had never lost one day's fishing on account of his leg. He had known from the start how to handle it. It meant simply that he was slowed down that much. It hadn't really made much difference in fishing. He didn't do as much wading but he got around just about as well on the whole. Hunting, of course, had had to go. You couldn't walk all day shooting birds, dragging a game leg. He had just given it up right off the reel though it was a shame when a man was as good a shot as he was. That day he was out with Tom Kensington last November, the only day he got out during the season. Nine shots he'd had and he'd bagged nine birds. Yes, it was a shame. But a man couldn't do everything. He had to limit himself. . . .

He was up over the little rise now. The field slanted straight down before him to where the pond lay, silver in the morning sun. A Negro cabin was perched halfway up the opposite slope. A woman was hanging out washing on a line stretched between two trees. From the open doorway little Negroes spilled down the path toward the pond. Mister Maury surveyed the scene, spoke aloud:

"Ain't it funny now? Niggers always live in the good places."

He stopped under a wild cherry tree to light his pipe. It had been hot crossing the field but the sunlight here was agreeably tempered by the branches. And that pond down there was fringed with willows. His eyes sought the bright disc of the water, then rose to where the smoke from the cabin chimney lay in a soft plume along the crest of the hill.

When he stooped to pick up his rod again it was with a feeling of sudden, keen elation. An image had risen in his memory, an image that was familiar but came to him infrequently of late and that only in moments of elation: the wide field in front of his uncle's old house in Albemarle, on one side the dark line of undergrowth that marked the Rivanna River, on the other the blue of Peters' Mountain. They would be waiting there in that broad plain when they had the first sight of the fox. On that little rise by the river, loping steadily, not yet alarmed. The sun would glint on his bright coat, on his quick turning head as he dove into the dark of the woods. There would be hullabaloo after that and shouting and riding. Sometimes there was the tailing of the fox—that time old Whiskey was brought home on a mattress! All of that to come afterward, but none of it ever like that first sight of the fox there on the broad plain between the river and the mountain.

There was one fox, they grew to know him in time,

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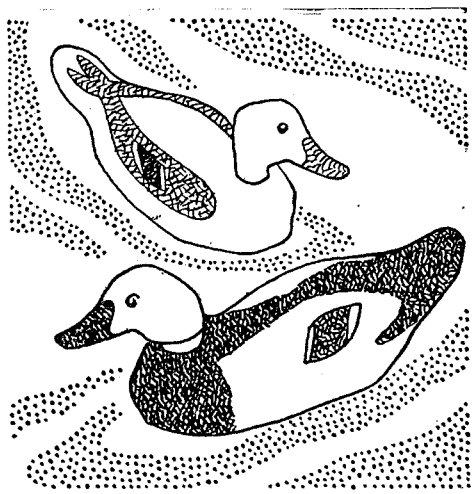
to call him affectionately by name. Old Red it was who showed himself always like that there on the crest of the hill. "There he goes, the damn', impudent scoundrel!" . . . Uncle Quent would shout and slap his thigh and yell himself hoarse at Whiskey and Mag and the pups but they would have already settled to their work. They knew his course, every turn of it by heart. Through the woods and then down across the fields again to the river. Their hope was always to cut him off before he could circle back to the mountain. If he got in there among those old field pines it was all up. But he always made it. Lost 'em every time and then dodged through to his hole in Pinnacle Rock. . . . A smart fox, Old Red. . . .



He descended the slope and paused in the shade of a clump of willows. The little Negroes who squatted, dabbling in the water, watched him out of round eyes as he unslung his canvas bag and laid it on a stump. He looked down at them gravely.

"D'you ever see a white man that could conjure?" he asked.

The oldest boy laid the brick he was fashioning out of mud down on a plank. He ran the tip of his tongue over his lower lip to moisten it before he spoke. "Naw suh."

"I'm the man," Mister Maury told him. "You chillun better quit that playin' and dig me some worms."

He drew his rod out of the case, jointed it up and laid it down on a stump. Taking out his book of flies he turned the pages, considering. "Silver Spinner," he said aloud. "They ought to take that . . . in May. Naw, I'll just give Old Speck a chance. It's a long time now since we had her out."

The little Negroes had risen and were stepping quietly off along the path toward the cabin, the two little boys hand in hand, the little girl following, the baby astride her hip. They were pausing now before a dilapidated building that might long ago have been a henhouse. Mister Maury shouted at them. "Look under them old boards. That's the place for worms." The biggest boy was turning around. His treble "Yassuh" quavered over the water. Then their voices died away. There was no sound except the light turning of the willow boughs in the wind.

Mister Maury walked along the bank, rod in hand, humming: "Bangum's gone to the wild boar's den . . . *Bangum's* gone to the wild boar's den . . ." He stopped where a white, peeled log protruded six or seven feet into the water. The pond made a little turn here. Two lines of willows curving in framed the whole surface of the water. He stepped out squarely upon the log, still humming. The line rose smoothly, soared against the blue and curved sweetly back upon the still water. His quick ear caught the little whish that the fly made when it clove the surface, his eye followed the tiny ripples of its flight. He cast again, leaning a little backward as he did sometimes when the mood was on him. Again and again his line soared out over the water. His eye rested now and then on his wrist. He noted with detachment the expert play of the muscles, admired each time the accuracy of his aim. It occurred to him that it was four days now since he had wet a line. Four days. One whole day packing up, parts of two days on the train and yesterday wasted sitting there on that front porch with the family. But the abstinence had done him good. He had never cast better than he was casting this morning.

There was a rustling along the bank, a glimpse of blue through the trees. Mister Maury leaned forward and peered around the clump of willows. A hundred yards away Steve, hatless, in an old blue shirt and khaki pants, stood jointing up a rod.

Mister Maury backed off his log and advanced along the path. He called out cheerfully: "Well, feller, do any good?"

Steve looked up. His face had lightened for a moment but the abstracted expression stole over it again when he spoke. "Oh, I fiddled with it," he said, "all morning, but I didn't do much good."

Mister Maury nodded sympathetically. *"Minerva invita erat,"* he said, "you can do nothing unless Minerva perches on the roof tree. Why, I been castin' here all morning and not a strike. But there's a boat tied up over on the other side. What say we get in it and just drift around?" He paused, looked at the rod Steve had finished jointing up. "I brought another rod along," he said. "You want to use it?"

Steve shook his head. "I'm used to this one."

An expression of relief came over Mister Maury's face. "That's right," he said, "a man always does better with his own rod."

The boat was only a quarter full of water. They heaved her over and dumped it out, then dragged her down to the bank. The little Negroes had come up, bringing a can of worms. Mister Maury threw them each a nickel and set the can in the bottom of the boat. 'I always like to have a few worms handy," he told Steve, "ever since I was a boy." He lowered himself ponderously into the bow and Steve pushed off and dropped down behind him.

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The little Negroes still stood on the bank staring. When the boat was a little distance out on the water the boldest of them spoke: "You reckon 'at ole jawnboat going to hold you up, Cap'm?"

Mister Maury turned his head to call over his shoulder. "Go 'way, boy, ain't I done tole you I's a conjure?"

The boat dipped ominously. Steve changed his position a little and she settled to the water. Sitting well forward Mister Maury made graceful casts, now to this side, now to that. Steve, in the stern, made occasional casts but he laid his rod down every now and then to paddle, though there was really no use in it. The boat drifted well enough with the wind. At the end of half an hour seven sizable bass lay on the bottom of the boat. Mister Maury had caught five of them. He reflected that perhaps he really ought to change places with Steve. The man in the bow certainly had the best chance at the fish. "But no," he thought, "it don't make any difference. He don't hardly know where he is now."

He stole a glance over his shoulder at the young man's serious, abstracted face. It was like that of a person submerged. Steve seemed to float up to the surface every now and then, his expression would lighten, he would make some observation that showed he knew where he was, then he would sink again. If you asked him a question he answered punctiliously, two minutes later. Poor boy, dead to the world and would probably be that way the rest of his life! A pang of pity shot through Mister Maury and on the heels of it a gust of that black fear that occasionally shook him. It was he, not Steve, that was the queer one! The world was full of people like this boy, all of them walking around with their heads so full of this and that they hardly knew where they were going. There was hardly anybody—there was *nobody* really in the whole world like him....

Steve, coming out of his abstraction, spoke politely. He had heard that Mister Maury was a fine shot. Did he like to fish better than hunt?

Mister Maury reflected. "Well," he said, "they's something about a covey of birds rising up in front of you . . . they's something. And a good dog. Now they ain't anything in this world that I like better than a good bird dog." He stopped and sighed. "A man has got to come to himself early in life if he's going to amount to anything. Now I was smart, even as a boy. I could look around me and see all the men of my family, Uncle Jeems, Uncle Quent, my father, every one of 'em weighed two hundred by the time he was fifty. You get as heavy on your feet as all that and you can't do any good shooting. But a man can fish as long as he lives. . . . Why, one place I stayed last summer there was an old man ninety years old had himself carried down to the river every morning. . . . Yes, sir, a man can fish as long as he can get down to the water's edge. . . ."

There was a little plop to the right. He turned just in time to see the fish flash out of the water. He watched Steve take it off the hook and drop it on top of the pile in the bottom of the boat. Eight bass that made and two bream. The old lady would be pleased. "Aleck always catches me fish," she'd say.

The boat glided on over the still water. There was no wind at all now. The willows that fringed the bank might have been cut out of paper. The plume of smoke hung perfectly horizontal over the roof of the Negro cabin. Mister Maury watched it stream out in little eddies and disappear into the bright blue.

He spoke softly: "Ain't it wonderful . . . ain't it wonderful now that a man of my gifts can content himself a whole morning on this here little old pond?"

III

Mister Maury woke with a start. He realized that he had been sleeping on his left side again. A bad idea. It always gave him palpitations of the heart. It must be that that had waked him up. He had gone to sleep almost immediately after his head hit the pillow. He rolled over, cautiously, as he always did since that bed in Leesburg had given down with him, and lying flat on his back stared at the opposite wall.

The moon rose late. It must be at its height now. That patch of light was so brilliant he could almost discern the pattern of the wall-paper. It hung there, wavering, bitten by the shadows into a semblance of a human figure, a man striding with bent head and swinging arms. All the shadows in the room seemed to be moving toward him. The protruding corner of the wash-stand was an arrow aimed at his heart, the clumsy old-fashioned dresser was a giant towering above him.

They had put him to sleep in this same room the night after his wife died. In the summer it had been, too, in June, and there must have been a full moon, for the same giant shadows had struggled there with the same towering monsters. It would be like that here on this wall every full moon, for the pieces of furniture would never change their position, had never been changed, probably, since the house was built.

He turned back on his side. The wall before him was dark but he knew every flower in the pattern of the wall-paper, interlacing pink roses with thrusting up between every third cluster the enormous, spreading fronds of ferns. The wall-paper in the room across the hall was like that too. The old lady slept there, and in the room next his own, Laura, his sister-in-law, and in the east bedroom downstairs the young couple. He and Mary had slept there when they were first married, when they were the young couple in the house.

He tried to remember Mary as she must have looked the day he first saw her, the day he arrived from Virginia to open his school in the old office that used to stand there in the corner of the yard. He could see Mister Allard plainly, sitting there under the sugar tree

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with his chair tilted back, could discern the old lady—young she had been then!—hospitably poised in the doorway, could hear her voice: "Well, here are two of your pupils to start with. . . ." He remembered Laura, a shy child of nine hiding her face in her mother's skirts, but Mary was only a shadow in the dark hall. He could not even remember how her voice had sounded. "Professor Maury," she would have said and her mother would have corrected her with "Cousin Aleck. . . ."

That day a year later when she was getting off her horse at the stile blocks. . . . She had turned as she walked across the lawn to look back at him. Her white sunbonnet had fallen back on her shoulders, her eyes meeting his had been wide and startled. He had gone on and had hitched both the horses before he leaped over the stile to join her. But he had known in that moment that she was the woman he was going to have. He could not remember all the rest of it, only that moment stood out. He had won her. She had become his wife but the woman he had won was not the woman he had sought. It was as if he had had her only in that moment there on the lawn. As if she had paused there only for that one moment and was ever after retreating before him down a devious, a dark way that he would never have chosen.

The death of the first baby had been the start of it, of course. It had been a relief when she took so definitely to religion. Before that there had been those sudden, unaccountable forays out of some dark lurking place that she had. Guerrilla warfare and trying to the nerves but that had been only at the first. For many years they had been two enemies contending in the open. . . . Toward the last she had taken mightily to prayer. He would wake often to find her kneeling by the side of the bed in the dark. It had gone on for years. She had never given up hope. . . .

Ah, a stout-hearted one, Mary! She had never given up hope of changing him, of making him over into the man she thought he ought to be. Time and again she almost had him. And there were long periods, of course, during which he had been worn down by the conflict, one spring when he himself said, when she had told all the neighbors that he was too old now to go fishing any more. . . . But he had made a comeback. She had had to resort to stratagem. His lips curved in a smile, remembering the trick.

It had come over him suddenly, a general lassitude, an odd faintness in the mornings, the time when his spirits ordinarily were always at their highest. He had sat there looking out of the window at the woods glistening with spring rain; he had not even taken his gun down to shoot a squirrel.

Remembering Uncle Quent's last days he had been alarmed, had decided finally that he must tell her so that they might begin preparations for the future—he had shuddered at the thought of eventual confinement, perhaps in some institution. She had looked up from her sewing, unable to repress a smile.

"You think it's your mind, Aleck. . . . It's coffee. . . . I've been giving you a coffee substitute every morning. . . ."

They had laughed together over her cleverness. He had not gone back to coffee but the lassitude had worn off. She had gone back to the attack with redoubled vigor. In the afternoons she would stand on the porch calling after him as he slipped down to the creek. "Now, don't stay long enough to get that cramp. You remember how you suffered last time. . . ." He would have forgotten all about the cramp until that moment but it would hang over him then through the whole afternoon's sport and it would descend upon him inevitably when he left the river and started for the house.

Yes, he thought with pride. She was wearing him down—he didn't believe there was a man living who could withstand her a lifetime!—she was wearing him down and would have had him in another few months, another year certainly. But she had been struck down just as victory was in her grasp. The paralysis had come on her in the night. It was as if a curtain had descended dividing their life sharply into two parts. In the bewildered year and a half that followed he had found himself forlornly trying to reconstruct the Mary he had known. The pressure she had so constantly exerted upon him had become for him a part of her personality. This new, calm Mary was not the woman he had loved all these years. She had lain there—heroically they all said—waiting for death. And lying there, waiting, all her faculties engaged now in defensive warfare, she had raised as it were her life-long siege; she had lost interest in his comings and goings, had once even encouraged him to go out for an afternoon's sport. He felt a rush of warm pity. Poor Mary! She must have realized toward the last that she had wasted herself in conflict, she had spent her arms and her strength against an inglorious foe when all the time the real, the invincible adversary waited. . . .

He turned over on his back again. The moonlight was waning, the contending shadows paler now and retreating toward the door. From across the hall came the sound of long, sibilant breaths, ending each one on a little upward groan. The old lady . . . she would maintain till her dying day that she did not snore. He fancied that he could hear from the next room Laura's light, regular breathing and downstairs were the young couple asleep in each other's arms. . . .

All of them quiet and relaxed now but they had been lively enough at dinner time! It had started with the talk about Aunt Sally Crenfew's funeral Tuesday. Living as he had for some years away from women of his family he had forgotten the need to be cautious. He had spoken up before he thought:

"But that's the day Steve and I were going to Barker's Mill. . . ."

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Sarah had cried out at the idea. "Barker's Mill!" she had said, "right on the Crenfew land . . . well, if not on the very farm, in the very next field." It would be a scandal if he, Professor Maury, known by everybody to be in the neighborhood, could not spare one afternoon, one insignificant summer afternoon from his fishing long enough to attend the funeral of his cousin, the cousin of all of them, the oldest lady in the whole family connection. . . .

She had got him rattled; he had fallen back upon technicalities:

"I'm not a Crenfew. I'm a Maury. Aunt Sally Crenfew is no more kin to me than a catfish. . . ."

An unlucky crack, that about the catfish. Glancing around the table he had caught the same look in every eye. He had felt a gust of the same fright that had shaken him there on the pond. That look! Sooner or later you met it in every human eye. The thing was to be up and ready, ready to run for your life at a moment's notice. Yes, it had always been like that. It always would be. His fear of them was shot through suddenly with contempt. It was as if Mary were there laughing at them with him. *She* knew that none of them could have survived what he had survived, could have paid the price for freedom that he had paid. . . .

Sarah had come to a full stop. He had to say something. He shook his head:

"You think we just go fishing to have a good time. The boy and I hold high converse on that pond. . . . I'm starved for intellectual companionship, I tell you. In Florida I never see anybody but niggers. . . ."

They had all laughed out at that. "As if you didn't *prefer* the society of niggers," Sarah said scornfully.

The old lady had been moved to anecdote:

"I remember when Aleck first came out here from Virginia, Cousin Sophy said: 'Professor Maury is so well educated. Now Cousin Cave Maynor is dead, who is there in this neighborhood for him to associate with?' 'Well,' I said, 'I don't know about that. He seems perfectly satisfied now with Ben Hooser. They're off to the creek together every evening soon as school is out.'"

Ben Hooser . . . He could see now the wrinkled face, overlaid with that ashy pallor of the aged Negro, the shrewd, smiling eyes, the pendulous lower lip that dropping away showed always some of the rotten teeth. A fine nigger, Ben, and on to a lot of tricks, the only man really that he'd ever cared to take fishing with him. . . .

But the first real friend of his bosom had been old Uncle Teague, back in Virginia. Once a week, or more likely every ten days, he fed the hounds on the carcass of a calf that had had time to get pretty high. They would drive the spring wagon out into the lot, he, a boy of ten, beside Uncle Teague on the driver's seat. The hounds would come in a great rush and rear their slobbering jowls against the wagon wheels. Uncle Teague would wield his whip, chuckling while he threw the first hunk of meat to Old Mag, his favorite.

"Dey goin' run on dis," he'd say, "dey goin' run like a shadow. . . ."

He shifted his position again, cautiously. People, he thought . . . people . . . so bone ignorant, all of them. Not one person in a thousand realized that a fox hound remains at heart a wild beast and must kill and gorge and then when he is ravenous kill and gorge again. . . . Or that the channel cat is a night feeder. . . . Or . . . His daughter had told him once that he ought to set all his knowledges down in a book. "Why?" he had asked. "So everybody else can know as much as I do?"

If he allowed his mind to get active, really active, he would never get any sleep. He was fighting an inclination now to get up and find a cigarette. He relaxed again upon his pillows, deliberately summoned pictures up before his mind's eye. Landscapes—and streams. He observed their outlines, watched one flow into another. The Black River into West Fork, that in turn into Spring Creek and Spring Creek into the Withlicoochee. Then they were all flowing together, merging into one broad plain. He watched it take form slowly: the wide field in front of Hawkwood, the Rivanna River on one side, on the other Peters' Mountain. They would be waiting there till the fox showed himself on that little rise by the river. The young men would hold back till Uncle Quent had wheeled Old Filly, then they would all be off pell mell across the plain. He himself would be mounted on Jonesboro. Blind as a bat but she would take anything you put her at. That first thicket on the edge of the woods. They would break there, one half of them going around, the other half streaking it through the woods. He was always of those going around to try to cut the fox off on the other side. No, he was down off his horse. He was coursing with the fox. He could hear the sharp, pointed feet padding on the dead leaves, see the quick head turned now and then over the shoulder.

The trees kept flashing by, one black trunk after another. And now it was a ragged mountain field and the sage grass running before them in waves to where a narrow stream curved in between the ridges. The fox's feet were light in the water. He ran steadily, head down. The hounds' baying was louder now. Old Mag knew the trick. She had stopped to give tongue by that big rock and now they had all leaped the gulch and were scrambling up through the pines. But the fox's feet were already hard on the mountain path. He ran slowly now, past the big boulder, past the blasted pine to where the shadow of the Pinnacle Rock was black across the path. He ran on and the shadow rose and swayed to meet him. Its cool touch was on his hot tongue, his heaving flanks. He had slipped in under it. He was sinking down, panting, in black dark, on moist earth while the hounds' baying filled the bowl of the valley and reverberated from the mountainside.

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The consumer is not a man but a woman—an Amazon with great power over the economic future, says the author of "Your Money's Worth." He outlines three methods of financing the consumer, one of which, he holds, must be followed.

The Consumer's Tomorrow

By Stuart Chase

THE consumer, as every American knows, is a little, respectable, suburban clerk, with glasses, an umbrella, a lot of packages, and a worried expression. At the risk of destroying a time-honored national figure I submit that the picture is all wrong. The consumer is not a man but a woman—women buy at least three quarters of all goods for ultimate consumption—and, far from being puny, she is an Amazon, towering, portentous, blocking the whole economic horizon of the years before us.

She stands thus in my mind despite the miserable rôle she has frequently played in the past. Totally unorganized, she has time and again paid scandalously high prices for sleazy goods and services. Shrewd advertisers have shamelessly exploited her conscious and unconscious hopes and fears, promising her beauty by the jar, health by the bottle, sex appeal by the vial, superiority to her neighbors by the yard, well-being for her children by the pound . . . at good, round prices per jar, bottle, vial, yard, and pound. She has lived in a vast, impersonal, highly specialized economic world, where vendibility has completely overshadowed serviceability; where all face-to-face relationship between buyer and seller has been lost. She has not, save for a few local services, like that of the village dressmaker or cobbler, the slightest idea who makes the products she buys, or what sort of persons they are; while the maker in turn will probably never lay eyes on her, and she becomes simply a sales ticket for posting to his journal, and thus to ledger and profit-and-loss account. Under handicraft conditions the face-to-face relationship prevailed. The producer had to be careful of his reputation for workmanship and fair value. But under modern conditions, as Veblen says: "One can with an easier conscience and with less a sense of meanness take advantage of the necessities of people whom one knows only as an indiscriminate aggregate of consumers."

As I write, it appears that the consumer is faced with an exceptionally precarious situation. Her well-wishers tremble for her; she trembles for herself; the Consumers' Advisory Board of the N. R. A. is one big tremble. Anti-trust laws are held in abeyance under the new dispensation, thus tending to deprive her of whatever benefits free competition has afforded her in the past. Trade association control of prices, quotas, and markets makes for greater possibilities of monopoly and quasi-monopoly than the nation has hitherto known. Meanwhile the Administration is deliberately fostering higher prices, assuring us that they are necessary, inevitable, and to be expected. What is to prevent, the tremblers cry, unconscionable profiteering in a situation with monopoly encouraged and higher price levels blessed?

The outlook seems dark indeed. It may well be that in the next few months the consumer will be put upon one of the toughest spots of her whole tough career. Despite the earnest solicitations of the Administration, the decent co-operation of many business men, the very considerable amount of protective competition which still remains, and the screams of the Blue Eagle, she may find herself paying unprecedentedly onerous prices for unprecedentedly shoddy goods.

I confess, however, that I find it difficult to view this situation—if it comes—as more than a passing phase. We shall all suffer while it lasts, but four lean years have inured us to suffering. What concerns me is the long-range point of view. I have reason to believe that irresistible pressures have been long at work behind the scenes and are now bursting stormily into the open, which will make the consumer dominant in the years—if not in the months—immediately before us. She is being forced into an entirely new rôle. Mass production, as Edward A. Filene has pointed out, means nothing unless it means production for the masses. The country

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is committed to this technique. It is the American way of life, as well as its pride and joy. It cannot function without a vast body of consumers able and eager to receive its mammoth output. In this obvious fact lies the bright tomorrow of the American consumer—always provided the mass production system continues to function at all.

II

The maintenance of a given civilization depends on an equilibrium. There must be a working balance between man and nature—climate, natural resources, the man-land ratio—and between institutions, classes, power groups, within the community. Individual satisfaction may not be high, but it must be *over the line;* high enough to insure reasonable stability. When it drops below the line, equilibrium is lost and the social structure put in jeopardy.

In the economy of scarcity—low-energy cultures primarily devoted to agriculture and handicrafts—equilibrium, once established, tends to persist for relatively long historical periods. Having come to terms with nature and the food supply, men are loth to upset the balance, even if standards of living are low, and the surplus above subsistence passed on to landowner, noble or priest. All the world lived in the economy of scarcity up to a generation or two ago—America being no exception, save for the fact that her surplus was not transferred by use and wont to a time-honored ruling class. The surplus was shared, to a large degree, and when passed on, went to landlords, speculators, and financiers by anything but an orderly, traditional process. Throughout the American age of scarcity—say from 1620 to 1870—equilibrium was maintained; satisfaction, while not general, was sufficient to keep the economic system functioning, and steadily to increase the surplus.

About five or six decades ago, the growth of the technical arts and the utilization of new forms of energy in coal, oil, and natural gas, began to write finis on the economy of scarcity, and, for the first time in history, usher in an economy of abundance. A wit has observed that scarcity connotes pressure of population on the food supply; abundance—pressure of food supply on population. (My whole thesis in respect to the consumer is implicit in this quip.) Droughts and pestilences spell crisis in scarcity; glutted warehouses spell crisis in abundance.

With the coming of a high energy civilization, changes in transportation, manufacturing, construction work, merchandising, banking practice (but not theory) were to be observed, but equilibrium persisted. While it was apparent that a financial and price system, developed in the economy of scarcity, was having considerable difficulty in adapting itself to conditions of actual or potential physical abundance, by and large the adaptation was made.

By 1930, however, the limits of adaptation seemed to have been reached. The financial formula founded on scarcity had stretched as far as its tensile strength permitted, in an attempt to confine and control the brute pressures of technological abundance. It snapped, and the Great Depression followed. In my opinion, and in that of many students in whom I place great confidence, that depression was not of the order of earlier depressions—which simply operated to bring in line a relatively modest debt structure with a rapidly rising production growth curve—but a new kind of depression altogether. Equilibrium was definitely upset, and American civilization was faced with the problem of finding a different basis for social and economic stability. We can never, I confidently believe, revive the old basis—unless mass production, labor-saving devices, energy installations, invention, research, the whole paraphernalia of abundance, are scrapped, and we retreat, in panic and in terror, to the stabilities of genuine, physical scarcity.

The formula of capitalism has run out. Even while we mechanically repeat this conclusion, most of us still unconsciously deny it. Our eyes, round with wish fulfillment, look across a waste of bankruptcies, foreclosures, impounded bank balances, passed dividends, lost jobs, privations, and heart aches, to a corner which surely must be rounded. Eagerly we read, and eagerly editors supply, any scrap of evidence which points to a return of prosperity. We brighten as we hear that the Widget Company of Sauk Center has taken on ten more men. If on the same day the Atlantic Company of New York has dismissed 1,000, we do not hear of it, and we do not want to hear of it. Yet until last March the real news behind the printed news of the depression was of this character. But the astounding vogue of technocracy bears witness to what millions of Americans felt down deep. They knew in their bones that the formula was done for; that capitalism was no longer capable of furnishing sufficient economic security to keep the social structure functioning.

III

The distribution of income is such, under capitalism, that absentee owners cannot possibly spend all the rent, interest, royalties, and profits they receive. Squander as they may, most of the income to capitalists must be reinvested. When one insurance company, or one savings bank, takes the savings of a great number of poorer people, the same principle applies. Opportunities for profitable reinvestment, therefore, must be constant and expanding, for capitalism demands a compound interest return on its savings. This is readily

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proved by the growth of the debt structure in the United States. The curve of its growth for fifty years has been a compound interest curve. By 1930 the compounding factor was 8.2 per cent.[1] It is obvious that to fulfill this cardinal requirement of the capitalistic formula, markets must expand at an equal rate. During the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, markets did so expand, with four raw continents to develop, and with the population of the world doubling in something over a century. The field for profitable investment was wide and lush.

The formula does not allow the distribution of goods on the basis of human need; it knows nothing of serviceability, only of vendibility. To secure goods for consumption a financial token must first be presented. The presence of that consumer's token is chiefly dependent on wages and salaries. Wages and salaries are dependent partly on opportunities to make the goods, and partly on opportunities to extend the apparatus—factories, steel mills, power houses—whereby consumers' goods are produced. The formula demands a *capital goods sector* of continuous investment as a flywheel for the whole process. For it is only by employing millions to make new plants, machines, power dams, railroads, that consumers receive a sufficient wage and salary total to take the goods off the shelves. Madam Consumer's purchasing power is all tied up with the capital-goods sector, which is all tied up with profitable investment, which is all tied up with headlong expansion.

When expansion reaches the physical limits of mathematical compounding, as it seems to have done in 1930, the opportunity for profitable investment disappears, capitalists large and small sterilize their savings by hoarding their funds in the banks, which find difficulty in reinvesting them; workers are no longer employed in the capital-goods sector—at least their number drops alarmingly—leaving them without wages and salaries. Total purchasing power is no longer adequate to clear the shelves of consumers' goods save at ruinously low prices. This spreads bankruptcy and unemployment throughout the consumers'-goods sector. In short, the flywheel has jammed, and the capitalistic engine will not turn over.

There is no theoretical reason, of course, why the formula cannot be revived. All the corner-rounders cherish such theories. There are one or two practical reasons, however. Where shall we find a new continent to develop? How shall we reverse our population trend, which now rapidly approaches a plateau? Where are gigantic new industries (not, if you please, the revamping of old industries already soggy with debt, but brand new ones) to be found? How is the march of technological unemployment, which is constantly eating away at purchasing power, to be stopped? Where are the possibilities of vast foreign markets? The answers that come back are: (*a*) air conditioning; and (*b*) the Russian market.[1] Not good enough, gentlemen, not nearly good enough. I stand ready to reverse my opinion when I can be shown a new field for profitable private investment capable of absorbing, say, a fifth of all wage and salary workers, to begin with, and capable further of expansion at a compound interest rate. I am afraid I must stand a long time. (I admit with Mr. Lawrence Dennis that a good, grade A war would keep the formula going for a time—always provided that any of us were left alive to enjoy it.)

[1] Bassett Jones, *Debt and Production*. The John Day Company.

IV

Social systems abhor a lack of equilibrium as methodical consumers abhor an unbalanced budget. The new balance must come in one of two major forms: (1) a retreat to the economy of scarcity, following a harrowing period of utter breakdown; (2) a re-alignment of political and financial institutions, which must be sufficiently flexible to function in an economy of abundance, and which must not demand a rate of expansion in the capital-goods sector based on compound interest.

On March 4, 1933, the government of the United States definitely turned toward the second of these alternatives. It adopted a policy perpendicular to the remorseless, automatic deflation which had steadily been gathering momentum since the summer of 1929. (Production, you remember, began to fall some months before the stock-market crash.) Had do-nothingism continued much longer, we should probably have been driven to the first alternative; a new equilibrium on the basis of scarcity. Already some of the familiar institutions of scarcity were beginning to appear. Barter groups were forming everywhere; barter is, of course, the trading norm of primitive scarcity societies. Farmers were allowing their tractors to rust in the fields and going back to horses and mules. There was much talk and some action in respect to subsistence colonies, and the back-to-the-land movement made considerable headway. Hoovervilles, piano-case communities, were springing up like mushrooms. I have in my files reports of Western farming towns which all but re-established local self-sufficiency, growing their own food, grinding their own grain, cutting their own fuel supply, much as their pioneer forefathers did three or four generations earlier. The net migration from cities to

[1] Another answer is, of course, public works. In the first place the three billions already appropriated is insufficient. The capital-goods sector normally needs twelve to fifteen billions a year. In the second place, public works are not consistent with the formula; they do not provide opportunity for private investment except indirectly. Many projects are not income yielding in the capitalistic sense. In my opinion, the formula cannot be salvaged by public works alone, admirable and necessary as public works may be. If we could colonize the moon, and open it to profitable exploitation, then we should have something.

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the farms in 1932 was well over a million persons. In a blind, pathetic way, the social organism, badly wounded, was searching for a new balance. Failing positive leadership of any kind, equilibrium was to be found only in retreat to the economy of scarcity.

Delightful as this retreat, pursued to its logical conclusion, might be to Mr. Ralph Borsodi, or to Mr. Ralph Adams Cram, it would be pretty hard on the rest of us, particularly during the transition period. When the period was over, I suspect that the population of America would have been reduced by half. At least that proportion of our fellow citizens are alive today because of the economy of abundance.

To President Roosevelt and his advisers belongs the honor of halting the winter march from Moscow. They began to reorganize the drifting, disintegrating army, renew its confidence, set up field hospitals for the sick, close the ranks, and wheel right about face. The clear promise of abundance was not, it appeared, to be lost without a fight. Equilibrium on the basis of the second alternative was what the New Deal meant. The entire nation applauded the choice. However inept may be some of the specific attempts to carry out this policy, we must never lose sight of the importance of the policy itself. We may be sure that history will not neglect the day that the formal government of the mightiest industrial nation admitted in effect that the capitalistic formula had run out, and that a new equilibrium must be found.

V

Very good. We are pledged to the establishment of equilibrium in a culture which includes mass production, a steady increase in labor-saving devices, a rapidly mounting curve of invention, and a per capita consumption of energy at least forty times that of scarcity societies. There is no precedent to guide us. High energy cultures have been hitherto unknown to *homo sapiens*. The idea of looking to Russia for a major technique is unrewarding. Russia is still carrying on in scarcity and will continue to do so for several decades more. She is a long way from pressure of food supply on population —which is the hallmark of abundance. A recent calculation shows that the United States now produces some 40 per cent more food than the population can possibly eat. Not *buy*, mind you, *eat*. Our stomachs, including those of all the hungry, all the unemployed, all the garbage-dump scavengers, are simply not big enough to hold the food we actually produce.

Failing precedents, one must experiment. Here again Mr. Roosevelt shows his acumen. He proposes a frankly experimental economy, and likens it to a football team. If one play does not work, try another. Keep trying; keep fighting. While experiment may be the order of the day, it does not mean that equilibrium must be groped for completely in the dark. Much of the preliminary exploration has already been done. There is an impressive body of theory, supported by intelligent and inquiring students the world over, covering the basic principles indicated in coming to terms with technological abundance. And here, patient reader, is where the consumer, so long neglected in the argument, re-enters and makes her bow. The argument is given at length because I do not see how it is possible intelligently to discuss the position of the consumer in the modern world without this background. Mass production demands mass consumption. The consumer moves to the forefront of any valid action directed toward the new equilibrium.

I am not sure that Mr. Roosevelt and his advisers are yet aware of her transcendent importance; but they will learn. They must learn, or their experiments will prove futile. Dr. Rexford G. Tugwell has learned it, as the following words from his recent book show:

"The discharge of a thousand debts is contingent upon the consumer's purchase. . . . It is quite clear that he must be both willing and able to pay the price, or the whole scheme will go wrong. All along the different owners of the good have had this in mind. Not only their costs are important; this willingness and ability of consumers is equally important. . . . The consumer's approval of productive efforts is not registered until *after* the good is completed; after countless expenses have been incurred, after numerous bargains have taken place, even after enormous commitments to overhead expense have been made. If the consumer should refuse, the whole structure would collapse."

Here is the economic apparatus, drawing raw material from all over the world, great ships bearing it, locomotives straining at it, vast mechanical operations grinding and processing it, jobbers, wholesalers, retailers bargaining for it, bookkeepers recording it, long-distance calls hastening it, bankers financing it, trucks delivering it—all into a gigantic hopper with a little valve in the bottom. The consumer has her finger on that valve. If she pulls it open the hopper discharges, to fill again. If she fails to pull it, or pulls it only half way, the hopper chokes; the ships, the locomotives, the mine hoists, the processing machines, the trucks, the jobbers, the banks, the very telephone girls, must bring their operations to a halt.

She opens the valve if she is willing and able. By and large she is willing enough, though stupid salesmen have grossly overestimated her saturation point in certain departments. So long as the capitalistic formula worked, she was able to buy—not to the extent of her willingness, God knows, but enough to keep the hopper reasonably clear. With the collapse of expansion and the capital-goods sector in 1930, she was no longer able to buy in sufficient volume. The hopper choked and

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will remain choked until she is able to buy again.

How apparent this all is in the proposals for, and the operation of, the Recovery program. Production spurted in the spring, spurred by returning confidence and the threat of higher wholesale prices. It shot up to the "normal" level of 1923–25. Shelves were restocked, warehouses filled, cotton-mill consumption rose to twice the normal level. But the activity was all predicated on one cardinal assumption: *that in the fall, the ultimate consumer would be able to buy.* Failing this, the manufacturing spurt was just one more exercise in overproduction. The Agricultural Adjustment Act was a bold, experimental attempt to furnish the farming community with ability to buy when the day of reckoning came. The National Recovery Administration was a bold attempt to meet the day of reckoning on behalf of the urban and industrial consumer. The public-works program was an attempt to provide the unemployed with purchasing power.

By the time these words are in print the awful day may have arrived. Can the consumer then open the valve? Not nearly far enough, I am afraid. Will this mean that Roosevelt has failed; that equilibrium cannot be won? No. It will only mean that the quarterback must try another play. But you see how the strategy of all plays, of every set of signals, must be directed out from the consumers' goal line. She is the alma mater of the team. Equilibrium under abundance can never be won by saving; only by spending.

Under the capitalistic formula it is probable, as we have seen, that the consumer can never again be adequately financed. From the War to 1930 she was financed only at a terrible cost; by piling up the debt structure to a colossal total, and by grossly over-extending the capital-goods sector until it was equipped to produce at least twice what the market called for. That was expansion's last gasp. We must turn to a new type of financing altogether. What form this will take I do not know, save that it will probably be the joint product of conscious planning and the blind pressure of circumstances, with the latter rather more in evidence than the former. The consumer *must* be financed—or back to scarcity we go. The method may have to be hasty. As I see it, there are three major methods. Let us explore them briefly.

VI

The consumer can clear the shelves of an abundance economy by:

1. The straight rationing of food, shelter, clothing, and other necessities under a rigorous economic dictatorship. This is the most remote of the three methods, except, possibly, during a brief transition period. In the event of a sudden financial collapse it might well be resorted to. We were not a hundred miles from it last March, with every bank closed. It is almost inconceivable as a permanent method, as it dispenses with any medium of exchange. A flexible medium of exchange is essential in any specialized industrial society. It does not follow that the medium need be kept so relatively scarce that a few collectors can accumulate a large proportion of it, and rent it out at compound interest.

2. The consumer might be provided for by a series of huge corporate monopolies, dealing in the essentials of life, owned and operated either by the state or by other collective device. In return for a calculable number of hours of labor devoted to these enterprises, every family in the nation would receive certificates (money) entitling its members to a high standard of living from birth to death. Reinvestment of these certificates cannot be tolerated. Any such proposal would have been fantastic before 1915, but today our productive capacity is such that, technologically, the method presents no insuperable difficulties.[1]

Corporate organization has already reached a point of nation-wide integration which furnishes the equipment, the energy installations, the manpower and the technical staff, to operate under such a plan. The only substantial change would be a financial one; absentee ownership would be disallowed, and the present "control,"[2] until lately so engrossed in discomfiting the investor, the worker and the consumer—one or all—would be invited to join Mr. Insull in contemplating, permanently, the sublimities of the Acropolis. Most of these gentlemen are of no managerial value whatever in operating the properties as industrial enterprises; their untiring concern has been with windfall profits in connection with rapid revaluations (expressed usually on the Stock Exchange) of the securities of the several corporations. If such profit has been consistent, from time to time, with ruining the investors, or with wrecking

[1] I have calculated elsewhere that on the basis of the present plant, a standard of living three times greater than the usual health and decency budgets (which average around $2500 a year) is possible for every family, at a work week of not over 30 hours. This does not allow immediately, however, for adequate housing facilities. Housing is a 10-to-20-year job for the public-works division.

[2] See Berle and Means, *The Modern Corporation and Private Property.*

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the technical operation of the industry, they have not hesitated to take it. Relieved of what Veblen has called their "businesslike sabotage," there is reason to believe that the properties could enormously increase their output of sound goods and services, at a fraction of the cost per unit prevailing hitherto.

I, for one, should not quarrel seriously with some equitable settlement in favor of the investors—who, with the public and the workers, have suffered at the hands of finance capital control—provided that the settlement is a non-interest-bearing lump-sum payment, reasonable in amount, and a complete quitclaim on any title to interference with a functional, balanced load management in the future. Such payment must be spent for consumers' goods, not reinvested.

Under this method, one would not expect all economic activity to fall within the scope of the collective corporate plan. Only the strategic essentials of food, fuel, clothing, shelter, transportation, health, and education would so fall. (The last two are already operated to a considerable extent as collective, functional enterprises.) A sizeable sector covering luxuries, style goods, handicraft, novelties, personal services, might well remain under private ownership and operation, subject to traditional competitive conditions.

3. The most probable form of financing the consumer, certainly in the immediate future, is through the device of consumers' dividends. More and more opinion is being driven to this choice, notwithstanding that it violates all the taboos of scarcity covering the morality of work. If technological conditions are such that a man cannot find work, while at the same time an abundance of goods can be produced, there is no reason, save the compulsion of an antiquated moral code, why he should starve to death. Already the code has been undermined by a wide variety of free services —or dividends—in the form of schooling for children, recreational and sanitation facilities, clinics, hospitals, and, lately, straight relief allotments in money, or in kind. The consumer, after all, is heir to the technical arts, and as such has a good moral claim to be a joint beneficiary of an abundance economy.

The principle already in force may be pushed to its logical conclusion—the consumer will be financed for the essentials of life whether he or she works or not. Needless to say every opportunity to provide useful work must be given, and performance demanded. Probably the most equitable way of doing this will be to keep everybody at work at shorter hours while maintaining high real wages. This the N. R. A. is already attempting, but its code hours average 40 per week, where I figure they should not exceed 26,[1] and its wage schedules are inadequate to clear the hopper.

[1] "Recovery and Unemployment," Stuart Chase, *Current History*, Nov., 1933.

Another way of receiving a quid pro quo for consumer dividend paid would lie in a huge public works program, utilizing all surplus labor in housing and highway construction, pest control, reforestation, flood control, rural electrification, and the numberless other things which would make America a healthier and more beautiful place in which to live. The principle is already in operation through the Civilian Conservation Corps. (Observe there is no nonsense about "pump priming" in this proposal. The pump-primers look on public works only as a means to restore the old formula. We are discussing a new formula.)

The financing of the consumer under this general heading probably involves the nationalization of the supply of money and credit, together with the disallowance of a very substantial share of the present debt structure, whether by inflation or otherwise. A strict functional planning authority must displace the automatic processes of *laissez faire*. It is extremely likely that Mr. Bassett Jones's law of a one to one relationship between the growth of physical production and the growth of capital claims must be deliberately applied, to maintain equilibrium. It is probable that the nationalization of certain key industries—the railroads, the power supply, the coal mines—will be in order. It does not follow, however, that private ownership and management will be dispensed with as summarily under this method as under the second method above. The whole strategy of the program will be to maintain a flow of income to the consumer adequate to clear the industrial hopper; *to keep that valve open*. Whatever private interests stand in the way must be removed.

VII

The political problems raised by these three methods of establishing a new equilibrium under the dictates of an abundance economy are, needless to say, profound. I am not, for the moment, considering those problems. I am only trying to chart and delimit the economic objectives of any political movement looking toward equilibrium.

Mr. Roosevelt has clearly announced his rejection of the old formula, but to date has not clarified his objectives. He wants purchasing power for the consumer and apparently wants also a modicum of debt service for the absentee owner. This is becomingly generous, but he may find that he cannot have both. Sooner or later, I believe, his objectives must definitely fall into one of these three patterns, or a combination thereof. If they do not, other hands must take up the work where he drops it. Even if America should be forced back to the economy of scarcity, it would not be without a bitter struggle.

Whoever is to direct that struggle, must wage it on behalf of the consumer. If she does not win, we shall all lose.

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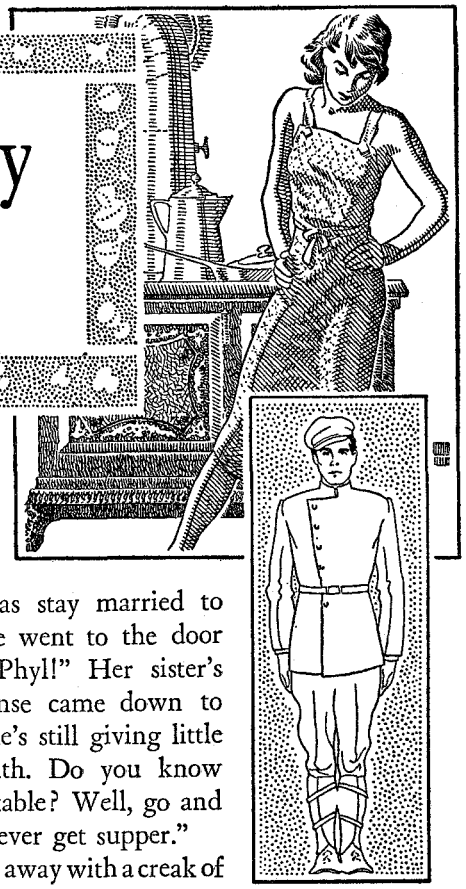
Every Day's a Holiday

A STORY

By James Gould Cozzens



FROM the front verandah Mr. Jamison called angrily, "Emily! You, Emily!"

"Oh, God!" she said. She slung the can opener into the sink, dumped the contents of the can of peas into a saucepan. "Howard! Get that liquor out of your car and make Father a drink. Make yourself one. Take them out and talk to him. He's going to run me crazy." She looked toward the door, noticing her father's chauffeur standing idle with a cigarette. "Mike, chop some ice."

Howard Hoyt had been sitting on the kitchen table, lax, in a sort of sad, dumb absorption. He stirred and stood up, removing his eyes from the stretched yellow linen of Emily's frock, the taut lines of her legs under it. Her feet were planted apart, stockingless, in ruined satin slippers which had once been gold-colored.

Mike said, "Where is the ice, Mrs. Brennan?"

"What would you think of looking in the icebox?" she asked. "And don't call me Mrs. Brennan. If you can't call me Emily, call me You. Do you think I like to be reminded of that bum?" She struck back her curly, dark-red hair, glancing the other way over her shoulder. "Howard, did you hear me?" Seeing his face, she turned squarely about. "Now, look here," she said, "if you're going to act like that, you can go home. Right this minute. Go on, get out of here! I won't stand for it. Those Peters people were down last night, and I forget who the night before, and they drank every drop of that other liquor. Now go and get what you brought and shut up!"

The screen door slammed gently after him. "Honestly," she said, "sometimes that man makes me want to scream. If he thinks he can be like that after we're married—put the ice there, Mike. Listen, is Father going to send you to the inn in the village? You can't sleep anywhere here unless you want to try the hammock on the porch. I told him Howard was coming. You didn't hear him say how long he was planning to stay?"

"No, I didn't, Mrs. Brennan."

"Listen, you aren't my chauffeur. I told you not to call me that. It kills me. If I liked to hear it, all I had to do was stay married to Brennan." She went to the door and yelled, "Phyl!" Her sister's muffled response came down to her. "Lord, she's still giving little Emily her bath. Do you know how to lay a table? Well, go and lay it. We'll never get supper."

Mike moved away with a creak of his black leather leggings, wiping his wet hands on his whipcord breeches. The screen door swung, admitting Howard, who lugged a case of bottles.

"Open one," Emily begged, "open one! Father will be howling again in a minute." She whipped about and cried, "Phyl! Phyl! Look at little Emily! That child's down here without a stitch on! Honey, don't you know you can't walk around with a lot of men that way? Get upstairs and let Aunt Phyl put some clothes on you—" she dissolved in laughter. "She's just a slut at heart, like her mother. That's right, Howard. There's the ice. There are the glasses. Wait a minute. How about me?" She picked up a coffee cup. "Give me half an inch. And don't be such a lemon. I'm warning you."

In a few minutes her sister appeared calmly. "Your daughter is dressed, Emily. You're welcome."

"Where's Keith?"

"I was going to tell you. I think he's upset. I told him to go to bed."

"And I told him if he ate any more cake at Mrs. Miller's I'd tan the hide off him. She just gets the little simpleton up there to try to pump him. God, these farmers!"

"He was there, all right."

"I know it. You can't do anything with him. He's just like Brennan."

"Emily, you jackass! If Father ever heard you say that——"

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"Well, what's he want? I was married to the rat for three years, wasn't I? I should think that would fix it up."

"It'll never fix up the fact you weren't married to him when Keith was born, you were still married to Sheldrick. Or have you forgotten that?"

"It's one of the things you don't forget. Lord, I'll be crazy if I try it again with Howard."

"Well, why do you?"

"I have to live. Brennan will never pay any more alimony. He hasn't sense enough to make any money. He's probably pie-eyed from morning to night. What can I do? Put him in jail? That doesn't pay any bills."

"I'll speak to Father. That's what I mean about Keith, you little fool. He'd simply disown you."

"Lord, Phyl, how dumb is dumb?"

"He isn't so dumb. But you don't have to prove it to him. And you be careful about Howard."

"Don't you worry. Howard started to go funny on all that liquor the Peters drank and what else. He's going to lie down and play dead this weekend. I've given him too darn much of a break. Father can have my bed and I'll sleep with you. We'll put Howard down on the couch in the living-room. Maybe Mike can sleep on the porch. There's a dumb boy."

"I don't doubt it."

"Where did Father get him?"

"How do I know? Probably from an agency. Is there any reason why he should be brilliant? And listen, I heard you telling him to call you Emily. I suppose you think Father would love that?"

"He can't call me Mrs. Brennan and get away with it. I'll have to stay and watch the steaks. Or, you stay and watch them. I'd better look at Keith a minute. Where's little Emily?"

"On the porch with Father and Howard."

"That must be quite a party. See you in a minute."

After a while there was a sound at the door and Phyllis glanced that way.

"I finished laying the table, Miss Jamison," Mike said. "What should I do now?"

"Nothing. Take a rest. If you want a drink, help yourself."

"Thank you, Ma'm."

"I see what Emily means," Phyllis nodded. "Listen, my lad, you're going to have to eat with us. Mrs. Brennan and I do what little serving is done. Don't feel you have to be fresh, but we can't stand on too much ceremony. Adapt yourself. Relax. We're all one happy family on a holiday."

"All right."

"That's better. If you've got a real shirt on under that coat, you can take the coat off. It's a pretty warm evening."

"All right." In his shirtsleeves, he sat on the edge of the chair. "Pretty country up here," he ventured.

"Nice for the kiddies," she agreed briefly. "We're living here this summer because we're good and poor. Or Mrs. Brennan is and you can see how devoted I am to her. Does that explain everything?"

"I hope Mrs. Brennan isn't mad at me, Miss Jamison."

"You hope, do you? O. K., Irish. Just keep hoping."

His stout form was sunk morosely in the sagging wicker chair on the verandah. Mr. Jamison raised the glass to his cropped white mustache, tilted it shortly, drinking, set it on the wicker table by the rail. He made a sound half a snort, half a cough. From the pocket of his tweed jacket he drew a huge silk handkerchief and wiped the knee of his white flannel trousers. Then he wiped his mustache and thrust the handkerchief back. Without more warning, he addressed Howard, who had been sitting silent on the top step clasping his glass and gazing out across the meadow and river.

"Where does all this liquor come from?" Mr. Jamison demanded.

Recovering, Howard said, "Why, I brought it up from town, sir. It ought to be——"

"Well, now, I wish you wouldn't do it," Mr. Jamison said. "There's too much drinking going on around here. If you didn't bring it up, they'd probably never miss it."

Howard looked at him, confused; but apparently no answer was expected, for Mr. Jamison continued more sharply. "Where's Emily?"

"She's getting supper, sir."

"Humph. I called her."

"She'll come as soon as she can, sir. Is there anything I can do?"

"No, no." He turned his heavy head abruptly. "Emily! Where are you going?"

"Upstairs," she called back.

"What for?"

"You'd only be embarrassed if I told you."

"Emily!"

"Oh, keep still, Father. Everything's all right. Keith isn't feeling well."

"What's wrong with the child?" Mr. Jamison asked Howard.

"I don't know, sir. I saw him running around half an hour ago."

"I don't think he gets proper food."

"Emily takes wonderful care of the children, Mr. Jamison. They couldn't get any better care."

"Well, I suppose she has nowhere to gad about to up here. In town she behaved like a hooligan. What business are you in, Mr. Boyd?"

"My name is Hoyt, sir," Howard said, awkward. "Why, I'm in real estate."

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Keith, flushed and bright-eyed in the early shadows, was not very sick, Emily saw. "Well, just for that you don't get any supper," she said, and laughed. "That's a break for you," she added. "You don't want any, anyway, do you?"

"No, Mummy. I don't want any."

"How much of that Miller garbage did you eat? Two pieces, I'll bet. Tell Mother what Mrs. Miller asked you."

"She asked me where my Daddy was."

"What did you say?"

"I said he was away."

"That's all right. What else?"

"She asked me what he was. I said he was a bum."

"Oh, my God! You would! What else?"

"I don't remember, Mummy."

"Yes, you do. Now, think hard."

"Well, she said didn't a lot of men come to stay at night here——"

"I knew it. The snooping old— Keith, honey, Mother's simply going to wale the life out of you if you ever go up there again. Honestly, I'd do it right this minute if you weren't sick."

"I feel like I wanted to throw up——"

"You and me both!" she groaned. "Get up! Get up! Get in the bathroom. Don't you dare throw up in here!"

"I thought so," said Phyllis. "This shack is wonderful that way. You don't miss a thing. Does he feel better?"

"He'll be all right. More ice, Mike, more ice. How about those steaks?"

"About five minutes. You stay here. I heard you telling Father to shut up. I'd better go out and smooth him down."

"Call little Emily, will you? She isn't out there. Father was riding Howard about bringing liquor up. You tell him to mind his own business. I notice he drinks it, all right. Lord, I meant to get a bath and put some clothes on. This is sticking to me."

She picked up the glass, tipped her head back and drank half of it without pausing, set it aside, and took a bread knife and a loaf of bread.

While she sliced swift and even, Mike, leaning against the far wall, his empty glass tilting forgotten in his large hand, looked at her. He said nothing and Emily sliced in silence until the whole loaf had been divided. Knocking off the ends of crust, she set up the pile of slices, cut it in half from top to bottom, shifted the result to a plate. She took the nearby glass and drained it, gave her hair a quick toss. Mike was still looking at her and, turning, she easily surprised his absorbed gaze. "Ah, there!" she said. "Thinking about your best girl, I'll bet!"

Starting, he reddened; began to smile sheepishly.

"Bring your glass here, Good-looking. We'll have another drink. One more stiff one and I may be tight enough to stand supper with Father." She looked toward the door. "Come on, Howard," she said. "You need another drink, too."

"Father, please don't be silly," Phyllis said. "Emily has supper to get for seven people. In this madhouse any one else would collapse completely. I don't know how she stands it. Howard, get Father and you another drink."

"No, no. I don't care for another drink. There's too much——"

"Get them, Howard."

When he had gone, Mr. Jamison said, "Who is that fellow, anyway? When did Emily meet him?"

"Oh, he's the one who sold the Larchmont house for her. He's a nice boy."

"What's he come up here for?"

"He comes up here because he's trying to get Emily to marry him."

"What's he want to do that for? Who wants to marry a woman with two children who's been divorced twice?"

"Now, Father, don't be childish. He's been divorced himself and he's old enough to know his own mind."

"I won't have Emily marrying another drunken wastrel. I told him not to bring any more liquor up." He pulled his mustache. "If he had any regard for her reputation he'd know better than to be staying here every week-end."

"Howard is the soberest man alive, Father. You needn't worry about him. Furthermore, I don't think you have any right to interfere with Emily."

"You don't, don't you!"

"My very words. You treat her like a dog. You always have. If Mother hadn't died, do you think Emily ever would have run off from school with Sheldrick that way? Maybe you've forgotten how you used to roar around the house."

"You leave your mother out of this! I can only be thankful, truly thankful, that she isn't here. The disgrace of it would kill her."

"Father, are you trying to fight with me, too?"

"I'm not going to have you being impertinent and speaking disrespectfully of your mother."

"You heard exactly what I said about Mother. Now, aren't you ashamed of yourself?"

Tugging his mustache again, he glared at her a moment. Grunting a little, he looked away then. "As soon as Emily can show me she's ready to live a quiet, sober life and bring up her children properly and decently, I'll see she has the means. That's what I've always stood ready to do. Meanwhile, she can live on that Brennan pup's alimony."

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"He hasn't paid her any for months. As a matter of fact, we've been living, and are right this minute, on what money I can spare."

"Well, you shouldn't do it. She made her bed. Let her lie in it. She had no business to get herself into a mess like this. How old is she? Twenty-seven! Think of it! At twenty-seven she's been divorced twice. Like a lot of Broadway riff-raff! I'm not going to make her an allowance. Not a cent. I don't want to hear any more about it."

"You won't. We'll get along. But don't you let me hear any more about what Emily ought to do, or ought not to. And if she wants to marry Howard, that's her business."

He had begun to grumble restlessly before she finished, and, pouting under his mustache, he could be heard now: "—thinks of nothing but pleasure. Other people have to work for a living. Decent and responsible attitude. Too much to ask, I suppose. Well, I won't make her any allowance. I'll give you a check before I go. Do what you want with it. But don't ask me to—" She reached out and patted his hand. "There's your grandchild," she said, indicating little Emily, who had appeared silently at the bottom of the steps. "You might ask her where she's been and generally make yourself agreeable. I'd better see what I can do in the kitchen."

In the shadows of the hall she encountered Howard, who had a glass in each hand. Nodding back toward the porch, she said, "The dust's settled a little out there. He's a trial; but if you talk to him nicely he'll mellow down. Do your best."

He nodded, looking at her. Then he said hesitantly, "Phyl, I don't think Emily ought to drink any more. She's pretty tight. I mean, I don't think your father will like it——"

"All right. I'll get her in hand."

In the kitchen there was a haze of grease smoke and a fierce crackle and hiss of broiling steaks. Mike was sitting in the broken chair by the table. Emily was on her knees before the oven, jabbing the steaks with a fork. The intense small jets of blue flame in the broiler shone on her flushed face. She was singing, with a certain husky sweetness which showed Phyllis that Howard was quite right:

"Why do I love you?
Why do you love me——"

Glancing up at her sister, she said, "They're about done." She steadied herself with her palm on Phyllis's hip. "I'm woozy. Give me a hand up, darling. I'll never make it alone. Want another drink, Mike?"

"But not for you," Phyllis said, bringing her to her feet. "I've just finished repairing the damage and I want you to behave. I can keep these hot a while. You haven't time for a bath, but beat it up and get under a cold shower for a couple of minutes. Hurry!"

"I'm all right, darling. Honestly——"

"You are not. Hurry up. And come down decently dressed. I mean, with something on under it. You know Father."

Mike put his glass on the table. "I guess I'd better not have any more, Miss Jamison," he decided. "She said I should drive her in to the village afterwards and get some groceries for breakfast. That's pretty strong stuff. I wouldn't want to be driving a car if I had any more."

"Well, now, maybe we'd better have Howard drive her in."

"Why, Miss Jamison," he said reproachfully, "I'm sober as a judge. Honest. I know where to stop."

"That's a wonderful thing to know," she agreed. "You might go out on the porch and tell Father and Howard that supper will be ready in five minutes."

Emily had on a frock much like the yellow one, but clean; a pale green linen. "I certainly threw away a wonderful edge then," she sighed. "Thanks, darling. Do I look refined? I swiped a brassière of yours." She slid her narrow tanned hand under Phyllis's arm, drew her close, their cheeks touching. Turning her head sharply she kissed her.

"O. K., brat," Phyllis said. "Get going. They're all in there."

From the dining-room she could hear Emily asking presently, "Won't you say grace, Father?"

"Don't be blasphemous!" Mr. Jamison roared.

Catching up the steak platter, Phyllis came to the rescue. "That'll do from you, Red," she observed. "Go and get little Emily's cereal. There's a carving knife, Father."

Later, when she came out to the kitchen to help Emily with the raspberries, Phyllis remarked, "If you've got to go up to the village, let Howard drive you. You've been treating him pretty rough."

"And it's only the beginning," Emily promised. She filled a pitcher with cream. "He makes me sick. He sticks to me. He sits around, like a dog who wants something, looking sorrowful. I know he told you in the hall I was tight. The rat! My being tight has given him a lot of damn good breaks. He wouldn't be any treat to a sober girl, I can tell you that."

"All right, all right! Don't yell, darling. Father can hear, too."

"He shouldn't mind. He didn't seem exactly glad to see Howard. He's so afraid I might have a good time, he wouldn't even let Howard by."

"He'll learn to like Howard better."

From the dining-room Mr. Jamison roared suddenly,

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"What are you two whispering about in there? Come out! Get on with supper!"

There was a continuous wink of fireflies in the dusk across the meadow to the river. Beyond the river, the white fence of the valley highway rounded the bend. Preceded by their pale shafted lights, occasional cars appeared, swift, small, and silent in the distance. Resuming his seat on the verandah, Mr. Jamison offered a cigar to Howard. When they had them lighted, Phyllis said, "Father, let Mike drive Emily up to the village. We need some stuff for breakfast."

"All right. Don't get any liquor. She was drunk at supper."

"Oh, no, she wasn't, Father. She can't get any liquor in the village anyway."

"She can get it anywhere, and does."

Howard, turning his face quickly in the dusk, said, "I can drive her up, Phyl. I'll——"

"No, no," Mr. Jamison said. "Let this fellow of mine do something. He never gets half enough work."

Embarrassed, Howard looked wretchedly at him. Mr. Jamison drew on the cigar, regarded the end of it a moment and said, "I'm sorry to sound short. I don't mean it that way, I simply don't want Emily to get herself a reputation—humph! I mean, people in a small community like this misunderstand. Would you care to tell me a little about yourself, Mr. Hoyt?"

"There isn't much to tell, sir."

"Well, what I meant, frankly—humph! That is, I had been given to understand that you entertained—I mean, in regard to Emily——"

"Yes, sir. I hope you wouldn't have any objection, if she were willing, to our being married."

"Yes. I see." He puffed a moment at the cigar. "Perhaps you'd care to tell me something about your financial—er—qualifications—" He turned his head. "Phyl gone?"

"She went out to the kitchen, sir. Did you want her?"

"No, no. I don't think the matter is one we need to discuss in her hearing, that's all. I mean, are you in a position to——"

In the kitchen Phyllis said, "Now take that slow and easy."

"Caught again," Emily nodded. She set the glass down. "Come on, Mike. You don't have to put the coat on."

"Listen, Red."

"Yes, darling."

"Don't you be too long."

"Quick as a flash," Emily agreed. "I'll do all tomorrow's dishes, Phyl. Get little Emily to help you. She won't have to go to bed for half an hour."

"See you get back to put her to bed."

In the dusky sky over the eastern hills appeared the great edge of the rising moon.

"Beautiful night," said Mr. Jamison.

It was, in fact, practically night. Only a last radiance of sunset or twilight remained on the pale dusty surface of the dirt road at the bottom of the short lawn. There was no wind, but the river and meadow and massing of big tree-tops about the wooden bridge across the small brook breathed a distinct coolness in the dark, now coming alive with the many sounds of summer evening.

Mr. Jamison said, "Are you a college man, Mr. Hoyt?"

Rousing himself, Howard answered, "Well, sir, I was at Lafayette for a little over a year. I didn't graduate. I couldn't afford it. I had to come home and work."

"I'm not a college man, myself," Mr. Jamison said. "They seem to make more of it nowadays, but I often think it's just a waste of a boy's time. More to your credit to have been able and ready to pitch in and help your family. You seem to have done well. I'm glad."

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Jamison removed the cigar from his mouth and looked first at it and then at Howard. He coughed and said, "I think Emily will settle down. She's not been in a good environment. Those fellows she was married to weren't any good. If she could get away from all that into a wholesome atmosphere she'd be different. I hope so for both your sakes."

"I wouldn't want to make Emily do anything she didn't want to do, sir. I'd want her to be happy. To have a good time."

"Of course. Of course. But that isn't all of life. Every day's not a holiday. Emily thinks it is."

Howard moved a little on the top step. Turning his wrist inconspicuously he managed to bring into view the luminous dial of his wrist watch.

From the door behind Phyllis asked, "Are you all right, Father? I'm going to put little Emily to bed."

"Yes. It's high time. The child shouldn't be up as late as this. Emily should have seen to it before she went."

Left alone, Howard and Mr. Jamison were both silent. The sound of a motor reached them after a min-

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ute and they both turned to look. Headlights were descending the slope through the trees to the little bridge.

"That ought to be Emily and the car," Mr. Jamison observed. "She had no right to go off like that and leave Phyllis with all the work to do. She could just as well have given that fellow of mine a list to take up."

There was a rumble of the coming car on the bridge. The headlights mounted the slope on this side. After a moment it was apparent that the car was a Ford. It went on past toward the Millers' farmhouse.

The moon, whiter, well clear of the low wooded hilltops, shone exactly mirrored, swaying a little with the slow current but unbroken, on the river. Howard had long ago finished his cigar. He lighted another cigarette. Finally Phyllis came downstairs and out into the shadows quietly. She dropped into the chair behind Howard. "Peace at last," she sighed. "Let me have one of those."

"What's keeping Emily?" Mr. Jamison said. "She ought to have been back long ago."

Howard had got up to give Phyllis the cigarette. He lit it now for her. She could see his disturbed face in the small glow and putting out a hand patted his arm twice. "Thanks," she said. "Emily had a lot of things to get, Father."

"Call up that store and see if they know anything about her."

"Father, don't be absurd. They'll be back in a minute."

"There's nothing absurd about it. She's been gone an hour and a half. It shouldn't take her twenty minutes. I want to know if she's been there, or if she's running around looking for liquor."

"Well, I'm not going to call up."

"If she isn't back in ten minutes, I'll call up myself."

"That wouldn't do you any good. The store closes at nine."

"Humph! Exactly as I thought! She's trying to find a bootlegger. You don't expect me to believe she's riding around looking at the moonlight."

"Why not?" inquired Phyllis. "She's been cooped up here all day."

"She has no business to stay away. She has a child sick upstairs, and——"

"Keith's been asleep for hours. He's perfectly all right."

"She doesn't know it."

"Lord," said Phyl, "let's have a drink."

"No. I don't care for one."

"Well, I do. How about you, Howard?"

"I guess so." Belatedly he added, "Could I help you, Phyl?"

"No, sit still."

Busy with ice and glasses in the kitchen, Phyllis heard presently the fast hollow rumble of a heavy car on the bridge down in the trees. A moment later headlights wheeled, flashed along the side of the house. A motor was shut off. From in front Mr. Jamison called loudly, "Emily! You, Emily! Come here."

Phyllis held the whiskey bottle motionless, listening. Emily laughed clearly. "In a minute," she said. "I want to put these things in the kitchen."

"Emily!" Apparently it was a failure, for he roared, "Mike! I want to speak to you."

"Yes, Mr. Jamison. Be right there."

Phyllis set down the bottle, went and pushed the screen door open. "Hurry up," she said.

Emily, her arms full of packages, slid in. She dumped them on the table. "Darling," she said, breathless. "Am I all right?" She smoothed the dress, fluffed back her hair with both hands.

"Yes," said Phyllis. "You're all right. Go on out there."

"We weren't long, were we?"

"Hours. I ought to kill you, Red. Go on, before I do."

"Phyl."

"Yes, you bum!"

"Father?"

"No. He thinks you were trying to get some liquor."

"Thanks, darling."

On the porch Emily said, "I'm sorry, Father. We had to wait around for the proprietor at the Inn so we could get a room for Mike. He can't sleep down here. He can go back now."

"Is that true, Mike?"

"Yes, Mr. Jamison."

"Is there any liquor in the car?"

"No, sir."

"Well, all right. I'll telephone when I want you tomorrow."

"Yes, sir. Good night, sir." He looked at Emily and said, diffident, "Good night, Mrs. Brennan." He turned away quickly toward the car.

"O. K., Irish," she said.

Mr. Jamison looked at her. "What do you mean by talking to him that way?" he demanded.

Phyllis had come out.

"Well, now," she said, "don't start a war. He is Irish, isn't he?"

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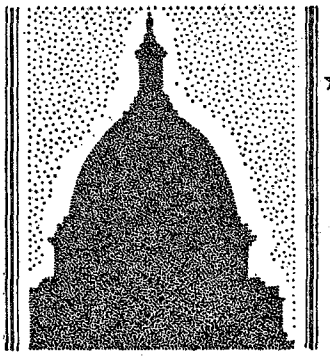
A Government in Search of a Labor Movement

THE NRA AND AMERICAN LABOR

By Benjamin Stolberg



The government has in effect taken over the functions of the A. F. of L. Can it forge from the whole working class an effective weapon for policing the New Deal? Mr. Stolberg points to the inadequacy of old-fashioned labor leaders and analyzes the necessary future course of government labor policy

LINCOLN happened to be an incomparable master of language, which has fooled the historians ever since. His style had a noble economy, moving yet indisputable. And he had the irresistible gift of endowing virtue with cunning. This contagious persuasion he used to reiterate only one aim. He wanted to save the Union, never less and nothing more. Thus he fascinated himself and the American people into mistaking his honest intentions for his deeper compulsives, his open political strategy for his inner historical drive.

For Lincoln was *not* primarily the savior of the Union. Primarily he grew—and in his growth was his strength—into the leadership of Northern industrial capitalism in its revolution against Southern agrarian slavery. For this revolution the indivisible Union was essential, because it needed the economy of a whole continent. To fight for more than the Union would have endangered the issue. Hence the political censorship which he naturally imposed upon his revolutionary unconscious. Hence we get the sense of his ineffable "shrewdness." Hence he seems like a giant historical sleep-walker who, from Fort Sumter to Appomattox, stepped unerringly toward his destiny.

The reason Lincoln believed and insisted that his leadership meant so much less than it did was that the American people, and he with them, did not want revolution. They were not willing to follow the Northern radicals. They did not care to die for the abolition of slavery. They certainly did not wish to kill each other for the sake of an industrial empire which they could not envisage. Even to preserve the Union they had to be drafted. In short, Lincoln had to use apparently constitutional means to achieve revolutionary ends.

I have no wish to compare Mr. Roosevelt to Lincoln. To compare a contemporary leader to one who has achieved a place in mythology is neither fair nor significant. Besides, Lincoln's political somnambulism, no matter how inspired, would be disastrous today. For, though our social chaos is far deeper than it was then, the social forces behind it and their ominous alternatives are far better known. It is perfectly clear that our Social Democratic Administration—call it "liberal" if you will—will have to turn to the right or to the left, and both roads—and even their detours—have been at least roughly surveyed. Mr. Roosevelt must not merely sense, he must know his direction. He has much more to learn from the failures of Kerensky, Nitti, and Scheidemann than from the tactics of Lincoln. For we are infected by an industrial malady which is universal. And yet we must never forget that we are not Russia, or Italy, or Germany. The forms of our destiny lie in the past of our history, just as the history of each individual patient determines the course of his illness, no matter how epidemic. And viewed in the light of our culture, the central predicaments of the Lincoln and Roosevelt Administrations are startlingly similar and tell us much about the way the American mind is confused when faced with a revolutionary crisis.

The New Deal, too, has no revolutionary warrant to function in a revolutionary world. Once more the American people believe that they wish to preserve a system, not to upset it. They are not ready to follow the new radicals. They do not care to fight for a social control whose outlines they cannot even envisage. They are ready to follow a more radical leadership than usual for the sake of "recovery," a term which betrays their sociological innocence. In short, the New Deal, too, must use apparently constitutional means toward unavoidably revolutionary changes. And it cannot avoid the strange contradictions which flow from this dilemma.

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Hence the New Deal insists that it is strictly constitutional, a sophistication which can be easily stretched in law but not in fact, for the constitution was perfected to protect property rights with a delicate vigilance which the New Deal must abridge and hence cannot respect. The Administration must also insist that the class conflict does not exist, just as Lincoln insisted that the class conflict did not exist. General Johnson and Mr. Donald R. Richberg are forever telling capital that it must not interfere with labor's right to collective bargaining, while they warn organized labor that it must not use pressure in organizing the workers. Such impartiality reminds one of the Wilmot Proviso which insisted that there was no real quarrel between slaveholders and abolitionists in the same territory. As a matter of fact, the NRA was established primarily to allay the very class conflict which it denies. And, paradoxically, in order to allay this conflict it must push the organization of labor, for without an organized labor movement as a counterpoise to the power of capital the contradictions in our economy are bound to deepen still further. Only a powerful labor movement can effectively police the New Deal. But labor cannot be organized without militancy. If the miners had not engaged in a series of strikes the coal codes could not have been forced upon the employers—even on paper. A militant labor movement, on the other hand, threatens to do more than merely police industry. It threatens to control it. Hence the NRA finds itself in the added dilemma of having to frown upon strikes which it needs to promote the spread of trade unionism.

Because of all these predicaments the primary task of the NRA is *political* rather than *economic,* for the economics of the New Deal presupposes for its proper functioning the release of the social forces of industrial democracy; and this is a political task. It is obvious that even should the minimum wage scales in the various industries prove enforceable, they are bound to raise prices prohibitively. Only if the NRA has the support of a strong labor movement to keep the minimum wage from becoming the prevailing wage can it hope to lessen the ever widening gap between prices and wages. And only with the backing of a powerful labor movement can the government ever dare to apply any significant scheme for the redistribution of income, without which no measure of prosperity is possible.

Just as Lincoln, willy-nilly, became the Emancipator, so Mr. Roosevelt, willy-nilly, will have to become the Organizer, if the NRA is to work. To a large extent, as we shall see, he has already taken over the functions of our dominant labor movement. Can he shape it to fit present conditions and extend it to include the whole of the American working class? In order to answer this question, we must look briefly into those forces in the history of American labor which have determined its attitude, or rather its lack of attitude, toward our industrial economy.

II

The foundations of large-scale industrialism were laid in the Reconstruction period which really lasted until McKinley. The rugged individualism of the geographical frontier was carried over into the frontier of industrial enterprise. The pioneers of the new industrial empire were reckless, able, and tough. The labor movement which opposed them, from the Civil War to the mid-eighties, vacillated between various types of Utopian socialism and the Ku Klux variety of syndicalism of the Knights of Labor. Neither form of organization could make much headway against the industrial buccaneers. It was not until Samuel Gompers founded "pure and simple" trade unionism that American labor began to speak a language which these buccaneers understood.

Gompers was a born guerrilla chieftain. He was bigoted, shrewd, honest, and tough. He threw overboard all the ideological ballast of socialism and other revolutionary doctrines and determined that American labor was to travel intellectually exceedingly light. "Pure and simpledom" believes that labor has only one right and that is the right to "collective bargaining," which means the right to existence. And from this right flow three natural duties: to fight for ever higher wages, for ever fewer hours, and for ever better working conditions. Otherwise its social philosophy was to have no social philosophy. It was purely non-partisan and opposed to any form of government aid and control. Since it was based on strictly autonomous skilled crafts it completely neglected the unskilled masses. In short, Gompers realized that the frontier of American industry required frontier methods of fighting. He went into organization campaigns with a gun on his hip and his fellow organizers travelled not on luxurious expense accounts but on bumpers. Buccaneer capitalism was attacked by buccaneer labor, and during the eighties and nineties the craft unionism of the American Federation of Labor became the most effective form of labor organization.

We cannot here follow the fortunes of the A. F. of L. and its deterioration from a militant labor movement to a petty middle-class "business unionism" during and since the war. What really happened was that American industrial organization finally outgrew its frontier traditions. Trusts became vast monopolies and monopolies became the mere pawns of finance capital. The craft unions, on the other hand, continued in their primitive methods which finally rendered them totally impotent. The skill which the average skilled worker had to sell became more and more useless as industry became more and more mechanized. Unskilled labor re-

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mained unorganized. Since the war the A. F. of L. has been largely engaged in two major struggles, both internal. It has been fighting "radicalism" in its own ranks, defining as "radicalism" any scheme of social justice which is not purely opportunistic. And it has continued its chronic internecine "jurisdictional disputes," which arise whenever two unions claim the same group of workers. During the great steel strike in 1919 sixteen unions fought among themselves to organize a practically unskilled mass of labor, thus defeating each other instead of the steel trust.

There are only two exceptions to this sorry picture, the needle trades workers and the miners. The tailoring unions are organized on a semi-industrial basis, and their long though stale socialist background has kept them in a more critical touch with industrial changes. The miners have a militant syndicalist history, having always been organized in a strictly industrial union, in which all the workers in the industry are under one jurisdiction. During the twenties these unions, too, were prostrate. But their traditions and their form of organization enable them to respond to quickening impulses.

Accordingly when the NRA began to apply the pulmotor to American labor it quickly discovered two things. The progressive tailoring unions and the industrial United Mine Workers revived very quickly. The old line craft unions were too far gone.

III

By mid-June the National Industrial Recovery Act (the NIRA), the enabling act of the NRA, was passed. It was wholly an Administration measure. And from the point of view of gauging the President's mind the NIRA is worth considerable study. It shows distinctly that Mr. Roosevelt believes that what American industry needs desperately is the recognition and the extension of the trade-union movement. For what the NIRA in Sections 7A and 7C really does is to change the whole nature of our dominant labor movement by safeguarding its minimal functions, almost to the point of taking them over. With one stroke of the pen the law turned our anarchist labor movement—that is, a labor movement which believed in relying least on the government—into a semi-public unionism, in whose doings the government has a public interest.

Section 7A, which cannot possibly be misinterpreted this side of sophistry, insists that "employees shall have the right to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing . . . (and) that no employee . . . shall be required to join any company union." But besides guaranteeing to labor its right to existence the law empowers the President, in Section 7C, to fix "such maximum hours of labor, minimum rates of pay, and other conditions of employment as he finds to be necessary to effectuate" the codes in recalcitrant industries.

Since these are the main functions which our trade unions claim as their own, one wonders what the Administration needs a labor movement for. It needs it for two reasons. First of all only organized labor can organize unorganized labor. And secondly it is left entirely to the trade unions themselves to obtain optimum conditions, to continue fighting for an even shorter work day when necessary, and above all to raise minimum wages to the maximum wage level. The President is specifically forbidden in the law to determine maximum wages and it is up to organized labor to raise the subsistence level to a decent living standard.

There is only one thing the NIRA did not dare do. It did not dare to tell the American labor movement that it must organize along *industrial* lines, into vertical unions, and abandon its rickety craft organization. Such a reorganization of labor would endanger the jobs of the A. F. of L. oligarchy. And of course it might render labor far too powerful for a liberal Administration.

As soon as the NRA began its task of codifying industries it ran into difficulties with the A. F. of L. The only unions which did their job were the semi-industrial needle trades and the industrial United Mine Workers. The rest of our trade-union movement immediately collapsed except in those highly skilled industries, such as the printing and building trades, in which the unions were already entrenched. From last June till the first of October the A. F. of L. has organized about 1,000,000 workers, of whom 500,000 are needle-trades and mine workers. Most of the other 500,000 workers were organized into "federal labor unions," which is a method of granting A. F. of L. charters to individual factories. This form of organization almost invariably tends toward jurisdictional frictions among the several crafts which demand that the skilled workers in those plants be apportioned among their separate unions. All told, the A. F. of L. at present has approximately 3,500,000 members. About 750,000 workers are organized out-

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side the A. F. of L. There are 37,000,000 Americans working for either wages or salaries!

When General Johnson, cavalry brigadier and manufacturer, became the boss of the NRA he knew next to nothing of the history and state of American labor. His primary qualifications for the job are an enormous working capacity and a reputation for organizing ability gained when he was in charge of the draft law during the war. The General is able, vital, picturesque, and temperamentally conservative. His main fault is his impulsiveness. On the whole he appreciates that industry cannot function without organized labor. So far the reactionary employers have lost out in the NRA. But what these ultra-conservative interests have lost in some of the rulings of the NRA they are gaining by an effective sabotage against labor in the actual operation of industry.

On the Labor Advisory Board of the NRA is Professor Leo Wolman of Columbia University and Research Director for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, one of the very ablest economists in the country. Among the labor members are President Sidney Hillman, of the Amalgamated, President John L. Lewis of the miners, President George L. Berry of the Printing Pressmen, and finally President William Green of the A. F. of L. With this set-up in its labor wing, the NRA was going to push the organization of labor to catch up rapidly with the organization of capital. All it forgot was that the A. F. of L. was not up to the job.

The United Mine Workers did wonders. John L. Lewis is one of the most conservative and also one of the most ruthless of our labor leaders. The history of the union under his leadership is one of chronic but unsuccessful revolts against him. I have seen him at national conventions of the union declare a motion "carried" which could not possibly have had more than fifty votes out of a thousand. But John Lewis is also extremely intelligent and shrewd and he realized that the union had the chance of a lifetime under the NRA. Throughout the summer the union carried on an intensive organization campaign. But above all he was helped by the industrial form of his organization. By the time the code hearings were begun the vast majority of the coal miners in this country was enrolled in the union, even in the industrial jungles of Alabama and West Virginia. During the turmoil of the last decade many of the miners had joined dissident organizations, communist or "progressive." They now all flocked into the United Mine Workers. Throughout the soft coal fields a series of spontaneous strikes consolidated the bargaining power of the union and practically assured the final adoption of the code. Urged by the Administration, the officers of the union tried their best to discourage strikes, but they were by no means sorry to use this labor unrest as a weapon to force the issue. The code was a complete victory for the union. Not merely were the non-union fields organized, gaining over 300,000 new members, which is a miracle in itself, but the workers were from now on to be paid in cash instead of scrip, they were to live in their own homes and to shop in non-company stores if they so wished. Wages, hours, and the extraordinarily intricate working rules in the industry were improved. On paper, at least, the union is victorious. Unfortunately the coal industry itself is moribund, partly because of over-expansion and partly because other fuels are supplanting coal. But the main trouble the union has to face is the fact that this industry is controlled by the most powerful groups of American capital, such as the United States Steel Company and the Mellon interests, which since the code went into effect have sabotaged it with or without legal fiction. But even so, the coal industry is the only basic industry in which labor is organized. And labor unrest, backed by a powerful industrial union, is very different from unorganized labor unrest. Mr. Moses of the Frick Coke Company cannot disregard labor without the terrible responsibility of provoking civil war in Western Pennsylvania. Mr. Ford can hire and fire and act as an industrial czar at his will.

The other unions which have taken on a new lease of life under the NRA are the needle trades. Under Sidney Hillman's leadership the Amalgamated Clothing Workers have kept in the vanguard of American labor and developed an elaborate system of collective bargaining which made codification of this industry comparatively simple. After some well-chosen strikes, the larger employers and workers got together to eliminate sweatshop conditions, and their agreements were immediately ratified by the government. The Amalgamated, which began as a split from the reactionary Garment Workers Union some twenty years ago, was also able to negotiate its affiliation with the A. F. of L. last October, and from now on Mr. Hillman's progressive leadership ought to be felt in the councils of the A. F. of L.

The International Ladies' Garment Workers Union also conducted a series of brief and brilliant strikes, under the leadership of David Dubinsky and Julius Hochman, mainly to eliminate the sweatshop, and then presented the strike settlements for ratification by the NRA in the form of a code. The lesser needle trades unions, such as the millinery and pocketbook workers, arranged matters pretty much the same way. In short, the socialist unions, whose militancy had been kept alive these last few years by an inner left wing opposition, fitted very easily into the drift towards state capitalism, which characterizes the New Deal.

The old line craft-separatist unions, on the other hand, broke down the moment the NRA machinery

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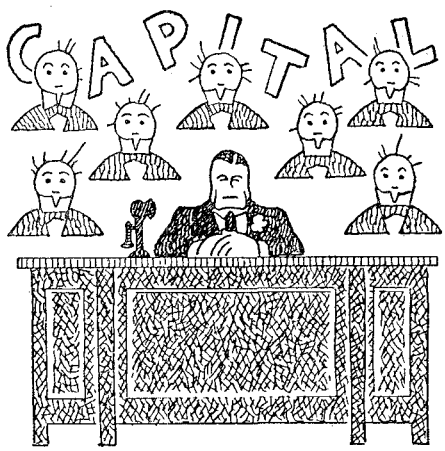
started. The A. F. of L. has not even a skeleton organization in a single basic industry except clothing, coal, and construction. It merely claims "jurisdiction" over vast masses of unorganized workers, whom it has never even attempted to unionize since the steel strike in 1919. In the industries where it does have a foothold, a rash of "jurisdictional disputes" broke out from coast to coast. The A. F. of L. was forced to put up with General Johnson's "interpretation" of Section 7A, which permits the automobile manufacturers to hire and fire on the "merit" basis without union review, which practically nullifies union protection. In defense of the General, who has come to rue this violation both of the spirit and the letter of the law as his biggest mistake, it may be said that the Automobile Workers Union exists entirely on paper and is almost powerless to tackle the industry.



A striking illustration of the pathetic importance of the A. F. of L. is its tactics in "settling" the strike in the motion-picture studios of Hollywood last August. Some 4000 workers, among them the highly skilled sound-men, were involved. The union of sound-men decided to call a strike. Whereupon the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers promptly filled their places. The United Brotherhood of Carpenters in the same fashion filled the places of striking studio stagehands. The producers added to the general confusion by a temporary lockout. The National Labor Board tried to straighten things out by deciding for the original workers. Mr. Green was asked to use his influence with the electrical workers and the carpenters to stop their strike-breaking activities. He frankly admitted that he was powerless. The producers and the strike-breaking unions, after having accepted the decision of the National Labor Board in favor of the original strikers, simply ignored it. A small part of the most highly skilled sound-men were taken back, and this gesture was considered a "settlement."

Mr. Gerard Swope, President of the General Electric Company, is a member of the Industrial Advisory Board and one of the most powerful influences in the NRA. Not so very long ago he created a "progressive" sensation in the American business world with the so-called Swope Plan, which was a very highfalutin scheme of company unionism in which labor helped capital to fix prices. At least that is what it amounted to if one studied it carefully. But since Mr. Swope, one of our most intelligent industrialists, has been in the NRA, he has become converted to authentic collective bargaining. And after the exhibition of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in Hollywood, he obviously did not cherish the idea of inviting them to become the leading union in the organization of the General Electric. In the organization of the General Electric some fifteen craft unions would be involved and Mr. Swope could not see his way clear to invite all of them to organize his highly mechanized industry, and then watch them wreck it in "jurisdictional disputes." He wanted some sort of industrial union form of organization. At least he played with the idea. And so he asked William Green whether the General Electric might not be organized on a vertical scheme. Mr. Green consulted his colleagues on the Executive Council of the A. F. of L., and then regretfully reported back that American labor could not undertake to organize the electrical industry on a strictly vertical basis. Just what Mr. Swope thought of the intelligence of our labor oligarchy is not reported.

As I am writing, the American Federation of Labor is opening its annual national convention in Washington. There is little doubt that Mr. Green and all his colleagues on the Executive Council will be re-elected. But there is also little doubt that a profound critical attitude is stirring in American labor. The prestige of the Greens and the Wolls and the Rickerts has been badly shaken by the NRA. The New Deal has brought out that they are not merely "conservative" but ridiculously inadequate for these critical times. The old-fashioned craft leader is through, for he is helpless to express the increasing restlessness of American labor. The country is full of spontaneous strikes. Wherever one goes one sees picket lines. When Mr. Green opened the national convention of the A. F. of L. with the vision of 25,000,000 Americans "genuinely and actually within the trade union family" under his leadership, the press table shook with long and low laughter.

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If the NRA does not succeed in rapidly organizing the power of labor, its "war" on the depression is apt to deteriorate into nothing but ballyhoo. American industry cannot be organized on moving-picture screens or on national hookups. It must be organized in the field of industry itself. If the New Deal fails in industry, the NRA is in danger of becoming a sinister fiasco, sinister in its reactionary implications.

Much nonsense has been written and said about the

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fascist tendencies of the Roosevelt Administration. The Roosevelt Administration is a typical Social Democratic Administration. A fascist movement cannot possibly succeed without first breaking the Social Democratic government in its way, though European experience has shown that such governments tend through sheer weakness to play into the hands of reaction.

But as yet, fascism lacks in America the two basic conditions for its success. Our vast middle class is by no means completely disinherited and disillusioned and ready to fall back upon a violent know-nothingism. And our working class is not moved by deep revolutionary currents. It is only when these two conditions prevail that a capitalist reaction subsidizes fascist demagogues to create a mass base of the middle class and to break up all workers' organizations through a sadistic terror. That is fascism. And should it ever gain an upper hand in this country it would first of all have to defeat Rooseveltism.

But though America as yet shows no signs of fascism, American history, due to its frontier background, has the peculiar characteristic of geometric social speed in time of crisis. The Roosevelt Administration has no need to fear a left revolution because we have no conscious revolutionary labor movement to amount to anything. The danger is from the right. And if the New Deal wants to make sure against ominous developments from the right it must, somehow, quickly and desperately, strengthen our organized labor movement, and drive it in the direction of industrial unionism. And it must "crack down" mercilessly on the least sabotage of the Blue Eagle. Wherever there is a picket line the government had better assume that there is a violation of the NRA and investigate.

The Administration must also channel the progressive forces it has aroused into some form of political party expression beyond Mr. Farley's Democracy. It must correlate its farm and public-works programs with a left orientation of the NRA. And it must find a way to increase purchasing power through a significant scheme for the redistribution of income.

In short, unless the government moves more rapidly and ruthlessly toward the left, it is hard to see just how the NRA can fulfill its function of increasing social control in industry. No one denies that the Roosevelt program in general, and the NRA especially, have been a profound educational experience for the American people. But if this experience is to be more of a cure than a shock, the government must not permit the reactionary forces in finance and industry to regain their brazenness; which they have been doing since September. Unless the Administration gets tough and enforces its program, the American people will plunge, or stumble, into a chaos no less ominous than the European peoples whose Social Democratic governments have failed them.

I Can Count On Myself

By Martha Bensley Bruère

Reflections of a woman of fifty who finds her generation more than holding its own

I HAVE always eaten my cake. Although I own to fifty plus, I am still eating it. And thousands of my contemporaries have the same pleasing habit. For we have stored up resources no business depression can seriously damage—inner reserves of experience and skill and self-mastery that have come to us as the first generation of women who have been free to deal with life on all fronts at first hand. We, who have used that freedom, credit the account with this profit: We have learned from the genius of life that we can count on ourselves.

At a recent luncheon of Vassar alumnæ I sat with women who were in college when I was there. Between us and the speakers' table was a thin cordon of the oldest graduates, women who went to college when that was a daring thing to do, who were met with the jest of a bootjack derisively placed in each room, and who, after that one bold break with feminine tradition, reverted gently to the ways of the ancestors. Back of us our juniors were ranged in chronological succession, class after class, the youngest under the far windows, restless, seething with protest, reluctant to take hold of

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a world that looked to them futile and hopelessly dominated by dull people bent on trivial concerns about which they incomprehensibly persisted in bothering. But we who sat between these two groups were neither in the throes of preparing for life nor suffering from the hopeless ache of looking back upon life; we were living life now and finding it good.

And yet there wasn't a rose-leaf complexion left among us, and most of our hair, if indigenous, was gray! But not one of us wore a black or lavender "old lady" dress, or a "middle age" hat, or an inch of real lace, or a pair of steel-rimmed spectacles. We had not made the mistake of letting the fashions pass us by. What if we did bend forward from the hips instead of the waist in order to subdue our diaphragms? Our fingers still came to the very tips of our light gloves, and it was through lorgnettes that we looked with irrepressible interest on what was still our world.

Our talk was a progress report: "Anne has six of her dramatic students in Broadway shows this year." "Mary has just been elected president of the Central Club." "I'm in partnership with my brother and am running the business while he serves his country in Washington." "Edith couldn't be spared from the Settlement long enough to come up; she's chief of staff there, you know." "I'm still playing tennis, of course, but no more international matches." "Louise is just back from Zurich and is holding a clinic up at the Med. Centre; dropped teaching after years and years to re-train and go back into practice."

And then Polly came in! Polly, of whom a young painter complained to me bitterly:

"Your 'Polly' is the bane of modern art! She's everlastingly sitting on juries and laughing when a picture doesn't happen to be a literal reproduction of what it is painted from. And her own stuff is always taking up space on the line. I'm not denying that the woman can paint, but why should she keep on doing it? Are there no back seats left, I ask you?"

Not for any of my group who were there that day! They are far too passionately interested in transforming all their stored energy and experience into works, works of individual artistic creation, or works designed to improve and reshape the whole social pattern. They are not quitters. Depression or no depression, they emit no tremulous sobs that life is hard. I can't imagine any one of them taking the short way out. The tighter the times, the keener the game, and the zest that comes from knowing that one can count on herself.

I said this to Alice, once our class president, who now holds a political office of considerable importance. "My daughter," she laughed, "insists that the only reason we are so sure of ourselves is that we haven't perception enough to be disillusioned. She says we are a generation of extroverts, and she talks as though that were a plebeian, animal, moron, Babbitty sort of thing, from which, good Lord, deliver her!"

"Well, aren't you, and isn't it? Do you feel deeply enough about anything to be capable of disillusionment?"

It was the defiant voice of the daughter who had come up from her place with the younger alumnæ; she was not so smart to look at as her mother and not nearly so gay, but there was something wistful beneath her defiance.

"Why should we be disillusioned," said Alice, "when we have been able to make so many of our dreams come true?"

Her voice, trained to carry from the platform, rang out in a sudden silence. Doctor MacCracken, who had risen to speak, visibly caught back his words. What a thing to hear from the lips of middle age in a year of general melancholia! But what Alice said expressed more than her own conviction, for it is by realized dreams that we of the confident fifties know that we can count on ourselves.

When I repeated this conviction to a practising psycho-pathologist he questioned me incredulously:

"Does the objective world still seem so important to you then?"

"Very! The reason I dread death is that I hate to leave anything I love so much."

"Do you get your release by doing things with your hands or with your head?"

"I don't know exactly what you mean by release," I protested, "as though I were a puppy snapped to a chain. I'm not tied up."

"Thank God, there are a few extroverts left!" he sighed.

There are plenty of them among the middle-aged women who have not indulged in the vices of renunciation and self-abnegation, or sought escape from the robust surge and glamour of the "objective world" in the ghost-haunted interiors of their own souls, or labored under the delusion that they ought to desire peace. Neither my college friends nor those I made afterward were adjusted during their formative years to anything so tame and static as peace. Although it wobbled as it went, our world moved rapidly and exhilaratingly. The generation before ours had cracked the pattern of it from side to side, we hammered at it until it fell apart, but we held fast to the core of it and accepted the responsibility of rebuilding it after a new design.

It is not primarily our virtue but our good fortune that gave us strength to keep hold, and the supplies with which to rebuild. Inductive science had produced the industrial revolution and laid the foundations of a new world of economic security; inductive science had produced preventive medicine and public-health

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technics which vastly reduced infant mortality and relieved women of the necessity of devoting their lives exclusively to the production of children in the interest of racial survival; inductive science had brought into the world the knowledge that within wide limits we can control our economic and social environment. The old pattern based upon the fear of hunger and the fear of racial extinction began to break up when Alice's generation and mine went to college. It broke up with such speed during the World War that the dust and confusion of its vast collapse blinded the generation that followed our own. They could not see the wonder of the new pattern on the loom of scientific planning and control that is visibly emerging through the depression which is the aftermath of the war.

Of course she was right, Alice's impatiently defiant daughter, in saying that we still have our illusions; but they are not, as her criticism implied, the illusions of undisciplined, day-dreaming fantasy. They are deliberately selected and cultivated and built day after day into a cosmic vision from which our minds derive a sense of integrity and harmonious wholeness in the universe. It is largely because we have learned how to set our mental houses in order and to separate dreams and possibilities and certainties from each other, that we can count on ourselves. There is no escaping the dreams that flood in upon us in our teens; they are nature's means for protecting us from the terrible strain of the transition from the certainties of infancy to unfolding mysteries surrounding life. We must substitute fantasy for these fading infantile imaginings until we acquire sufficient self-mastery to compel our thoughts along the definite track that leads to reality. And if we never acquire it? Well, the psychiatrists are busy trying to give those who have stalled at this point a fresh start. But my generation at fifty plus has gone through the stage of uncontrolled dreams, and through the stage of day-dreaming possibilities, into the land of controlled accomplishment. And just as realization is far more delightful than mere anticipation, so is our state the happiest of all.

"I have divided the things that I want out of life into groups," a successful woman of fifty told me. "The first is made up of the things I know I shall never have—dreams that must remain lovely dreams forever. In one of these dreams, the girl I should like to have been trails down a long curving stair, one delicate hand showing like pearl against the dark rail, the other half hidden in the folds of her pale pink gown. Her light hair is piled high and from under her long lashes her starry eyes look down upon—well, they have looked down upon a great variety of things in the past twenty-five years, on the Great Career, on Prince Charming in car-load lots, on Untold Wealth, Martyrdom for a Cause, Political Triumph and Power. Some of these I keep for deliberate day-dreaming purposes in lieu of the cruise I should like to take when I can't. Some of them are trail-blazers toward plans I may want to execute, like the epic poem I work on now and then, though I have never met an editor who was offering prizes for epics; or like the dwelling-house that will be as convenient and intelligently constructed as a first-class factory yet as charmingly beautiful as an old mansion in Charlestown or Nyack or Framingham. Every morning when I am half awake I drift into the storehouse where I keep these dreams that are pulling on my heartstrings and teasing my mind to transform them into ambitions; sniff to make sure that there is no need for moth-balls, and then, fully awake, set myself to the things I know I can do—and must!"

This friend of mine has her illusions but she is not dominated or harried by them. Unrealized dreams do not gnaw at her soul like a swallowed fox. She sees the present and the immediate future rich in delightful opportunities. She rejoices in shouldering the world along where she wants it to go. She is as ingenious in suiting means to ends as any Yankee woman who mends her egg-beater with a hairpin. Fantasy, illusion, desire are all held under the control of intention, so that she always knows her mind and what to do with it. She can put the human parts of a committee together so that it will run smoothly. I have seen her face a trouble-maker who was like a tiger in full charge and decide in a split second whether to use the velvet touch or the brass knuckles. Neither state legislative committees nor senate hearings in Washington hold any terrors for her. All the wisdom distilled from all her experience she is able to command when she rises to her feet to make an after-dinner speech or to argue for the reduction of the club budget. And like the rest of us who at fifty know that we can count on ourselves, she enjoys using her body which, thanks to the domestic aids provided by the machine age and reasonable attention to the new knowledge of hygiene, she has brought across the half-century mark practically intact.

None of us, it is true, prances upon the grass just for the joy of feeling the leg muscles work, but we can count on muscles and nerves to stand up under a stiff day without aches or yelping cramps. We may *think* now and then that what we long for is a hammock and a book, but that is apparently a mere ancestral craving like the inlander's vestigial longing for the sea, for when the chance comes we are likely to be found in riding breeches transplanting zinnias. It is we who undertake the gardens, who pull the weeds and plant the lily bulbs, we who crawl through the perennial border on our hands and knees to rescue the larkspur seedlings. Even poverty we do not take to be either fatal or final, and we make adjustment to it a part of the game. The president of an important club hung her own wall

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paper last year, a painter who has exhibited in the Corcoran personally forked the manure into her vegetable garden to save on the price of the bean and the carrot; our wash-tubs splash, our sewing-machines hum, our cookstoves sizzle under our hands. Because we can meet the emergency we know that we shall be able to overcome it, slip the world back into gear again, or if necessary rebuild the car. Because we can count on ourselves we know that we can count on our world.

Given the fact that we are physically and mentally able to hold the place we have made for ourselves—why are we allowed to keep it? Why does not the generation next younger snatch the reins from us, as we snatched them from our mothers? Three reasons: they are not, thanks to increasingly stringent laws against child marriage and the rise of public opinion against too early or too frequent production of offspring, following quite so hot upon our heels; the new world which we have helped to create has a use for the qualities which we still retain; their normal enthusiasms have been clouded by the distorted historical perspective due to their foreshortened vision of the horrors of the world war and the tragedies that attended the insane speculative boom that followed it. That experience has made them a generation of introverts, concerned more with their inner fantasies and the cultivation of their "individual personalities" than with the building of a better world civilization. Even when they practise the arts or go into business, their motivation is not social reform but purely personal satisfaction. And when they succeed they tend to be egotistically mystical about it. I asked three of the more successful of my younger friends what they considered the source of their power.

Said one: "I am able to write because I have learned to tap that great pool of power that is back of all life and not of this world. The soul is its sluice-gate."

"When I begin a portrait," said another, "I am in the depths of despair until I empty myself of the dross of experience and let the great flood of infinite power that is beyond understanding flow through me."

Said the third: "I get strength to manage my real-estate business by self-analysis and psychic adjustment to the racial unconscious which is the reservoir of the wisdom of ages."

Three honest statements from three successful young women—but I think they deceive themselves. Back of their fantastic rationalizations I cannot help seeing the strange prancings and posturings of the tribal medicine man who implored the spirit of his god to descend upon him, the Borneo savage waiting motionless beneath the head of his latest kill till the strength that was his enemy's envelops him, the Negro revivalist shouting till he "spits cotton and gets the power," the quiescent patients of the various cults who empty themselves of sensation so that the divine spirit under any of a dozen pseudonyms may fill them up. Yes, I think they deceive themselves, because I know what a store of experience has gone even into their comparatively young lives, and because when I look inside myself for the source of whatever force I have, I find no such magic as my ancestress, the witch girl of Salem, might have used, but instead a reservoir into which I have poured so much experience that I can draw on it as I would draw a check on the bank. It is as simple as that! For me power comes not from something outside of life but from the living of life itself. It is this confidence in the inherent solvency of life that has enabled the women of my generation to keep their integrity through the great war and the world depression, and that holds their hands firm on the reins now. We have not been disillusioned, we are not willing to retreat from life. The same obligation that was on our grandmothers to operate their world of the home, that was on our mothers to run the widening world of missions and women's clubs and higher education, that was on us in youth to win suffrage and economic independence, drives us now to help work out a new social pattern from the elements of our past accomplishments—a new pattern for the materialization of our dreams. And as we emerge from the backwash of the war and the fog of the depression, our confidence in life and in ourselves as part and parcel of it is finding daily confirmation.

Take as just one example the present policy and program of the United States Department of Labor which are the direct outgrowth of the work done twenty years ago by little groups of women through Consumers' Leagues, and Women's Trade Union Leagues, and Workmen's Compensation Commissions, and Minimum Wage Boards and scores of similar organizations.

We have built ourselves into our world in a sense that earlier generations did not, and our personal fulfillment and joy in the present comes through our effort to reshape this thing that is ours according to a new design. And are we happy in this effort? Do we like the feel of our shoulders against the wheel year after year? Don't we regret that autumn of contemplation that was held out as a promise to generations of women? That time when our interest in life would centre in the affairs of the younger generation growing up around us? We do not! Our interest in life is not vicarious, our happiness is intense and personal and of wide variety.

I said something like this to a young friend and she asked sceptically:

"Do you mean that what you've still got can make you happy?"

I know that she was voicing the superstition that only

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by adjusting themselves to an existence that gives them progressively less and less can women who have passed youth find even contentment, and that the thing they most poignantly regret is romantic love.

Well, of course there is something that goes with the rose-petal cheek that no beauty specialist can keep for us after forty. To be caught and kissed behind the door has become, to say the least, infrequent. When men kiss us it is quite openly on the cool cheek or the inert hand—and it is to be hoped that they like the flavor of vanishing cream! But women hold men by other bonds than the easily forged ones of physical attraction. Sex is also of the mind—a mental and spiritual thing. We do not lack for men's society. They take us to lunch and the theatre, they drop in for tea, and as for matrimony here are some gleanings made among my friends during the past year.

"I've got past the stage of ecstasy but when they talk about my falling back on the maternal instinct I just thumb my nose. Charles has come up every week-end for twenty years and my grandchildren love him, but I can't quite make up my mind to marry him." . . . "Just because Bronson was so long in England last year, that man who's doing the murals asked me to get a divorce!" . . . "Ruth is far more attractive to men than she was at twenty. She's learned how to dress to subdue her height and lets them do the talking. It's sex sublimated perhaps, but they get to her house in time for breakfast." . . . "Nancy married her broker last year . . . you know she's a fine parlor ornament." . . . "I'm the marrying kind so I'm going to do it again. I have to have some one to keep house for, and entertain for, and get my pearls out of the safety deposit for."

And we're supposed also to have lost the joy of undertaking new things. Plenty of my friends have changed the direction of their interests after fifty. One who was a teacher has become a psychiatrist, one who was a physician has become a painter of flowers, a physiologist is producing plays, one has gone into banking, another into publishing, another into real estate, another into hotel management—and all with success. Everywhere the back seat that we used to be expected to occupy is vacant.

Of course we are happy! We do not keep our present place under compulsion, but because we love it. We shall hold it against all comers through no altruistic motives. The advantage we hold over the group directly behind us of a long smooth approach for the running jump over the wreckage of the past nineteen years certainly does not fill us with pain. Our lives have the delight of being very much of a piece.

I have just been talking with a woman in the early thirties who is utterly uncertain as to what she is going to do with the remainder of her life which looks to her like a bewildering gray fog. Her world has subjected her to such terrific jolts that she can see no promise that it will do anything else. And yet she is so young and beautiful and rich that I couldn't withhold an exclamation of envy.

"But I'd change places with you in a minute," she cried. "Life hasn't tamed you; you have something you're sure of—your world and yourself!"

As she spoke, I seemed to see again my own grandmother who had so conspicuously practised the virtues of renunciation that she had no place left in the present. In yards and yards of black silk heavy with jet, she sat on a cushion and sewed a fine seam, or read Campbell's *Pleasures of Hope* while her robust daughters and their respective offspring occupied the foreground. My cousins and I used to wonder at an old side-saddle of hers that hung in the barn. It was impossible to imagine grandmother in the saddle instead of the rocking-chair. None of us would have changed places with her!

I came in late for a political meeting during the last campaign and sat on the back seat with two giggling young things who couldn't remember the Great War and had missed most of the Sham Prosperity.

"Doesn't mother look swank on the platform?" said one: "I always go when she's speaking. But it isn't just because with her dandy figure she makes a $2.95 dress look like a million dollars, and it's not because what she says is so hot. I think her politics are *rotten!* I know a lot of things I'm going to have different when I get into politics. It's because any one can see that mother's having a *grand* time!"

It is to the girls of that age—not to the women ten or twenty years younger than ourselves—that we can safely hand over our beloved world. That generation has got its intention firmly set on doing something to the pattern. It is not yet sure what it wants its world to be like but it is trying desperately to find out. It does see, I think, why we have so bothered about things, as well as the fact that we are enjoying the job. It is for them as well as for ourselves that we continue eating our cake, and trying to retard the procession of the generation like a slowed-up movie with a long spring, a lingering summer, an extended autumn, and winter at the irreducible minimum in the human year.

Edmund Wilson's "The Old Stone House" on page 368 in this number presents the reflections of a man in his late thirties contrasting the life of preceding generations with his own.

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Thorstein Veblen

By Ernest Sutherland Bates

A biography of the stormy petrel of American economics, called by many America's most original thinker. His economic analysis was prophetic and is now meeting growing acceptance

THORSTEIN BUNDE VEBLEN was one of the few great original thinkers whom America has produced. Thirty years ago he pointed out the defects of our modern industrial system that are evident to every one today. He tore to shreds the theoretical defense of capitalism elaborated by political economists during two centuries, and was the first English writer to place economics on an empirical and scientific basis. "He, more than any other one man," writes Professor Harold Clark of Columbia, "altered the course of American economic thought." Similarly Professor Paul Homan of the University of Chicago writes that "almost all the new leads in economic thinking which have been fruitfully followed out during the last twenty years are in some degree directly traceable" to Veblen. Wesley Mitchell, W. F. Ogburn, Charles Beard, Harry Elmer Barnes, Rexford G. Tugwell, A. A. Berle—they are, in varying degree, Veblenians all.

Veblen's writings are still new and fresh, even those of them written a quarter-century ago. Who now reads Theodore Roosevelt's *The New Nationalism,* or Woodrow Wilson's *The New Freedom,* or Herbert Croly's *The Promise of American Life?* The fatuous optimism of their period drips from the very titles. But Veblen, the pessimist, is read ever more widely. Out of an entire generation of political and economic thinkers, he alone produced a body of thought that lives on.

Our modern social insanity, characterized by starvation based on over-production and by deliberately suicidal wars, was long ago coolly analyzed by Veblen and its causes traced. He came into our world like a stranger from a far planet, finding our most familiar customs as bizarre and curious as we find those of the Andaman Islanders. Interested, ironically amused, occasionally indignant, despite himself, at the inhumanity and destructiveness about him, he drew the picture of his times and pointed grimly toward a future, possibly better, but more likely worse than the present. A lone wolf, with all the pack against him, he had one powerful ally, Time. He had other allies, friends, and disciples outside the pack, but it is Time, above all, that has justified him.

Yet his death in 1929, on the very edge of the great depression, passed almost without notice. Could he now observe his posthumous renown it is safe to say that he would regard it with his wonted irony. In his lifetime he was, by and large, an unhonored prophet, a notorious black sheep of the academic world, driven back and forth across the continent, hounded from each congenial pasture by the well-trained dogs of law and order. He did not seem particularly to care. No man, at least outwardly, had greater scorn for all forms of popular approval.

He was tall and gaunt and gray, phthisic and always ill. In social assemblies he sat silent, or surprised his associates by an occasional incredible platitude—whether meant seriously or not, they never knew. He delivered his college lectures, seated, hunched over his notes, muttering and mumbling in a voice barely audible, with an elbow on the desk and one hand half-covering his mouth. When he came to the New School for Social Research in New York, after being dismissed from three other institutions, the director, Doctor Alvin Johnson, drummed up an audience of seventy for his opening lecture. Veblen, though in desperate need of money at the time, made no concessions to popularity. He lectured in his usual manner and at the next meeting had an audience of six. Perhaps one student out of a hundred would have his entire course of life and thought changed by Veblen; the others got nothing from him. He deemed one in a hundred a sufficient proportion.

With his lanky figure and pointed beard, he was often likened to Don Quixote, especially when living at the New School with an Armenian professor whose figure resembled that of Sancho Panza. Yet this modern knight of the woeful countenance was much admired of women. The dogs of law and order held that, too, against him. He was not only an economic heretic, they barked, and a poor instructor, but he was a scandalous

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creature. They were right, according to the mores of the day. Veblen's departure from the University of Chicago, it was rumored, was largely owing to a reckless crossing of the Atlantic companioned by the wife of another member of the faculty. At Leland Stanford there were not unsimilar occurrences. But despite his reputation, Veblen was not at heart a gay Lothario. Sex he considered a rather burdensome cosmic jest, to be endured as best one may without allowing it to intrude into one's serious thinking, although one might occasionally permit oneself an outraged fling at an outrageous society. In his relations with women he was usually the pursued rather than the pursuer, the victim rather than the victor. He was not "faithful," but he was otherwise uniformly kind, which he regarded as much more important. That his first wife became "queer" and that his second, much younger than himself, became violently insane, were misfortunes for which he was little responsible and from which he was the chief sufferer. On the whole, sex was a cause of misery to him, along with ill-health and poverty.

It was his outraged flings which gave him his unmerited reputation. Revolted by the least sign of stiff and starched respectability, he was tempted to parade his indiscretions as a mark of contempt for bourgeois hypocrisy. He scented a bourgeois taint even among the Socialists. New York still recalls a Socialist dinner in his honor to which the representatives of the proletariat came in formal evening dress, determined to capture Veblen for the movement. One irrepressible comrade, however, an extraordinarily handsome man, brought with him a chorus girl more noted for her beauty than for her knowledge of Karl Marx. Veblen, arriving in a plain business suit, turned his ungainly back upon the rest and devoted all his attention to this lady. The Socialists did not capture Veblen, but Veblen captured the chorus girl. Don Quixote in a sack suit, fighting modern windmills with modern methods.

Were it not for this element of exhibitionism in his amours, there would be less occasion to recall them. But the exhibitionism was as important a feature of his character as was the aloofness which it seemed to contradict. Without the second he could not have written as he did, without the first he might never have written at all. And both sprang from the same source.

"Scandihoofian" is the hospitable term with which the native Americans in Wisconsin and Minnesota welcomed the newcomers of Swedish and Norwegian stock. Veblen was a "Scandihoofian," member of a proud but at that time culturally despised minority. He was born in 1857 in Wisconsin, the son of a Norwegian immigrant, a carpenter, who later took his large family to a Scandinavian community in Minnesota, where he became a successful farmer. Of Veblen's immediate relatives, one became a prosperous lumber merchant and two others attained some eminence in academic life, members respectively of the faculties of Princeton and of the University of Iowa. Belonging to an unusual family and early conscious of his own ability, Veblen was not one to submit tamely to social discrimination on the score of his race.

There were other elements of discontent in his community besides that of racial consciousness. The nascent Populist movement of the West was beginning to get under way during his childhood. Criticism of Wall Street was prevalent enough. Then, too, Veblen's early life on the farm united with his frugal Scandinavian heritage to give him a pronounced distaste for every form of luxury, a distaste that was later to urge him on to his famous analysis of the "leisure class."

At the age of twenty Veblen entered Carleton College, at that time the seat of John Bates Clark, who was soon to become the leading orthodox American economist. Clark's logical subtleties, difficult to answer though obviously at variance with fact, further stimulated, by opposition, the spirit of revolt in Veblen. Passing both the junior and senior examinations in Carleton at the end of his junior year, Veblen repaired to Johns Hopkins for graduate study in philosophy, but, finding George Morris's idealism little to his taste, he transferred to Yale, where he took his Ph.D. in 1884, with a dissertation on "The Ethical Grounds of a Doctrine of Retribution." During the same period he wrote an essay on Kant's "Critique of Judgment" which was published in William Torrey Harris's *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*. At Yale he was influenced by William Graham Sumner in the same negative manner as by John Bates Clark at Carleton, these two stout defenders of society achieving what seemed to him a kind of reductio ad absurdum of their own doctrines.

Although regarded at Yale as Noah Porter's star student in philosophy, Veblen was unable to find a teaching position in a subject which was then still a perquisite of college presidents and retired clergymen. He returned to the West and passed the seven traditional lean years—years of study which were poor enough financially but were rich in intellectual development, for at their close he had definitely formulated his philosophy of life and his approach to social and economic problems.

The most important constructive influences upon his thought at this time were Darwin, Spencer, Tylor, and, above all, Karl Marx. The former led him to an evolutionary position somewhat beyond their own in its complete acceptance of cosmic mechanism. The latter, though he rejected many of Marx's special theories, taught him the significance of variations in the material means of production as the basis of social and cultural change. His own position was in essence a reformulation of Marx in evolutionary terms, with additional ma-

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terial from Wundt, William James, and even the rejected Sumner, the whole deriving a new slant from his own temperamental approach.

Through some of his early writings Veblen obtained a fellowship in economics at Cornell under Professor J. Laurence Laughlin, and when in 1892 the latter went to the new University of Chicago he took Veblen with him to a minor position in his department. The University of Chicago, under President Harper, secured the services of what was probably the ablest faculty ever brought together in an American institution. There Veblen came in intimate contact with such men as John Dewey, Jacques Loeb, Wesley Mitchell, Herbert Davenport, and Robert Hoxie. Under the stimulation of this yeasty environment, his fourteen years at Chicago were the most productive of his entire career. Indeed, it may be doubted whether anything that he did in the twenty-three years after leaving Chicago was more than a filling out and completion of his earlier achievement.

During the Chicago period he wrote the majority of the essays collected in the volume entitled *The Place of Science in Modern Civilization,* as well as three other books of major importance, *The Theory of the Leisure Class, The Theory of Business Enterprise,* and *The Higher Learning in America* (which was not published until thirteen years after it was written).

The Place of Science in Modern Civilization is the least known but probably the most significant of all of Veblen's works. The essays in it, published originally in technical journals and familiar only to economists, were one and all directed against the "classical economics" of his day. To appreciate their value, we must recall the main tenets of that economics.

The classical economics, then all but universally accepted in America and still taught in the more backward of our colleges and universities, was a theoretical elaboration of the "rugged individualism" praised by a recent but now almost forgotten president of the United States. It was substantially identical with the views held until yesterday by the great majority of Americans, not only held but incorporated into their organisms, bone of their bone and sinew of their sinew. Originated by John Locke and given its classic formulation by Adam Smith in the eighteenth century before the Industrial Revolution had done away with handicrafts, it reflected the actual condition of society before the rise of machinery, big business, and mass production. It taught that one has a natural right to private profits as a reasonable reward of private industry; that capital is accumulated through the frugal savings of its owners and is thus a "reward of abstinence"; that loans and credits are devices to assist the less wealthy members of the community; that the laborer enjoys the same "freedom of contract" as the capitalist and that his failure or success is dependent on the amount of his own efforts. It will be conceded that all this was typical "American doctrine" at the beginning of the twentieth century, even though it had been worked out by Englishmen a hundred and fifty years earlier, and even though during that hundred and fifty years industrial conditions had entirely changed.

The only point wherein classical economics differed from the ideology of the Average American was in its general assumption that men are actuated solely by the desire to obtain pleasure and avoid pain, and even here the Average American, in his more cynical moments, would have been inclined to agree. This hedonistic assumption, however, made necessary a complicated profit-pleasure labor-pain calculus dealing with an abstraction called "the economic man," the result of which was to enlarge the breach between economics and actual life. As industrial conditions departed farther and farther from handicraft, economic theory became more and more deductive, a series of inferences unchecked by facts but all going to prove what John Bates Clark flatly announced in his *Essentials of Economic Theory,* namely, that "each man is paid an amount that equals the total product that he personally creates"—a statement that deserves to be remembered as a supreme example of the folly that can fall from the lips of accredited wisdom.

This whole economic pseudo-science Veblen subjected to devastating analysis. He riddled its dogmas and ridiculed its methods. As an alleged social science, economics, he urged, should be based on an empirical study of changing conditions, not on a parody of mathematical deductions from supposedly eternal principles. The hedonism of classical economics had long been discredited in philosophy and had been definitely overthrown by modern psychology. The static conceptions of classical economics had been rendered antiquated by evolutionary science. It was based on an outworn individualistic conception of society; it disregarded a century of technological development; its notion of capital as physical goods neglected the immaterial assets that have become the major part of capital; its opposition to monopoly contradicted both the inner logic and the actual development of capitalism; its identification of increased business and increased production was utterly erroneous; above all, it took for granted a mysterious "natural right" to private property instead of examining the alleged right from the point of view of its social serviceability.

Veblen regarded economics as part of the general study of human culture instead of as a special field of investigation separated by barbed-wire entanglements from all the other social sciences. He himself brought to its illumination a vast amount of historical, anthropological, and psychological knowledge. The conservative economists of his day were bewildered and disgusted by his habit of bringing the customs of the

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ancient Cretans or of the primitive Melanesians into a discussion of modern civilization. Surely we were Anglo-Saxons, descendants of Adam Smith, not Cretans or Melanesians! Nevertheless, Veblen continued calmly to show that Cretan and American women were much alike, and that many modern ways of living were far less rational than those of the peaceful Melanesians.

In his *Theory of the Leisure Class,* published in 1899 and already adumbrated in an article on "Some Neglected Points of Socialism" in 1892, Veblen turned his attention more directly to the question of the serviceability of private property. From the passing of primitive communism down to the present time, he found that social esteem and special privilege have been largely monopolized by the non-productive groups of warriors, priests, and acquisitors or inheritors of unearned wealth. These groups have formed a leisure class whose contempt for labor, determining the social outlook, has established an ideal of actual non-serviceability. Incommodious but ostentatious houses, uncomfortable but fashionable clothes, lavish entertainment, and the prestige of useless learning, such as a knowledge of Latin and Greek, all testify to the prevalence of this ideal.

The book opened up a new field of study and interpretation, but it hardly touched the contemporary business man, whose cultural rôle has been somewhat different, and whose proudest boast has been that, above all others, he has proved himself a productive agency, developing the American continent, intersecting it with railroads, creating wealth and prosperity. This claim Veblen subjected to close analysis in his succeeding work, *The Theory of Business Enterprise,* published in 1904, reaching diametrically opposite conclusions to those generally accepted. He drew a sharp distinction between "industry" and "business," industry being concerned with production, business with the transformation of production into private property.

This distinction, now regarded by many, writes Professor Homan, "as an indispensable instrument of economic analysis," was distantly suggested in an interesting but forgotten work, to which Professor Mitchell called my attention, published in 1821 by an unknown writer who called himself "Percy Ravenstone."

In Ravenstone's book, cumbrously entitled, in the manner of the day, *A Few Doubts as to the Correctness of Some Opinions Generally Entertained on the Subjects of Population and Political Economy,* he wrote: "Property is the creature of convention; it owes its birth, its origin, to society; it can have no rights but what it derives from its (society's) will, none but what are conducive to its benefit. . . . The rights of industry are far different in their importance; they are the rights which a man has in his limbs, in his faculties, in himself."

Ravenstone, of course, used the terminology of his time, but his point was not unsimilar to Veblen's. The latter, however, had probably never even heard of Ravenstone, and, in any case, he developed the idea in an entirely different manner, applying it especially to contemporary conditions. Modern wealth and prosperity, such as they are, he showed, have been derived from the vast increase of production made possible by technological improvements. Scientists and inventors are the true parents of modern industry. The business man, on the other hand, makes his profit not from production but from prices; to maintain prices he is always ready to "sabotage production" so far as he dares, to manipulate the market so far as he can. Instead of being socially efficient, the business system is one of constant waste, through the unemployment of material resources, through the rivalry of salesmanship, through the production of superfluities and spurious goods, through dislocation and duplication everywhere. The business man, in other words, instead of being a leader of industry, is a monkey wrench thrown into its wheels. The only escape in sight from all this waste and inefficiency lies in the inevitable development of monopolies, but this will leave prices still divorced from production, will turn the country over, bound hand and foot, to big business, and will lead, when the domestic market is exhausted, to foreign wars.

So much, in general, for the vaunted "service" rendered by business, the chief modern agent of private property. In *The Higher Learning in America,* Veblen took up the question of its influence on education. He showed that the governing boards of our universities are everywhere composed of influential business men, who, though necessarily out of touch with educational problems, nevertheless select the president, determine the quality of the faculty, and guide the academic policy. And the results: an increasing number of business presidents, devoid of scholarship; a progressive lowering of standards; such an emphasis upon "the accessories of college life," athletic and social, that the old term "institution of learning" can now be used only in an ironic sense.

"These accessories of college life," Veblen wrote, "have been strongly on the increase since the business régime has come in. They are held to be indispensable, or unavoidable; not for scholarly work, of course, but chiefly to encourage the attendance of that decorative contingent who take more kindly to sports, invidious intrigue, and social amenities than to scholarly pursuits. Notoriously, this contingent is, on the whole, a serious drawback to the cause of learning, but it adds appreciably, and adds a highly valued contribution, to the number enrolled; and it gives also a certain, highly appreciated, loud tone ('college spirit') to the student body; and so it is felt to benefit the corporation of

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learning by drawing public attention." The remedy, Veblen mildly suggested, would be to do away with the governing boards of business men, who, he readily showed, give only perfunctory attention to the actual business needs of the colleges, and to replace them with educators, who might, where necessary, have a staff of business subordinates.

Bold though he was, Veblen did not venture to bring out "The Higher Learning" until he was through with academic teaching. It did not appear until 1918, but the trend in American universities having undergone no change, it was then fully as pertinent as in 1905. Veblen's charges were all reiterated once more in 1930 by Abraham Flexner, with copious additions of his own, in his volume on *Universities*. But both Veblen and Flexner were answered in a typically American manner. They were not refuted. Nearly every one professed to agree with them; and then, nothing was done.

From 1906 to 1909 Veblen was at Leland Stanford, and from 1909 to 1918 he was at the University of Missouri. But something seemed to go out of him after leaving Chicago. Whether it was ill health, personal disappointment, the lack of stimulus in his environment, or, most likely, all three, the keen, alert thinker that was Veblen now loitered and procrastinated, seemingly only half awake. His long exile beyond the Mississippi produced only two books, and those toward the end of this period, *The Instinct of Workmanship and the State of the Industrial Arts,* in 1914, and *Imperial Germany and the Industrial Revolution,* in 1915. The former was merely a restatement of earlier work and in less convincing form. Veblen had always trusted too implicitly in evolutionary anthropology, and when this was largely discredited by the work of Boas and his school, he failed to modify his views accordingly. He had always overemphasized the rôle of deliberate, conscious activity, and he refused to learn from Freud. On the other hand, he also refused to learn from Watson and the behaviorists. He had been vegetating, mulling over his old ideas, until they took exaggerated form in a kind of cosmic opposition between a mythical instinct of workmanship, the father of art and industry, and an equally mythical predatory and pecuniary instinct, the mother of war and madness.

The actual war in 1914 brought him back to reality. He was no pro-German, but neither was he the victim of Allied propaganda. *Imperial Germany and the Industrial Revolution* was one of the sanest books written during that stormy period, showing the rivalry of English and German industrial imperialism, though granting that, at the moment, Germany's was the greater menace to the world. On America's entrance into the war, he went to Washington as an industrial aid. Asked to prepare a report on the I. W. W., he made a thorough study of that unpopular organization, concluded that its demands were reasonable, and recommended in his report that they be granted. Asked to investigate food shortage, he uncovered considerable profiteering in high places and submitted names and dates. Washington then decided that it could dispense with Veblen; he seemed to have no sense of what war meant. He had now earned the enmity of the bureaucracy, and when in 1919 he published *An Inquiry into the Nature of Peace and the Terms of its Perpetuation,* the book and its predecessor were suppressed by the government. In it he had offered the helpful suggestion that the neutralization of all citizenship was absolutely essential to a lasting peace, an entirely sound measure which stood about as much chance of adoption as had his earlier educational suggestion to abolish all existing boards of trustees. Men did not really want peace any more than they wanted education; what they wanted was to be able to talk about peace and education—but not in such an unbecoming manner as was Veblen's.

During 1918, along with John Dewey and Helen Marot, Veblen became one of the editors of *The Dial* in its new and brief incarnation as an organ of liberal social thought. It was there that he published the articles later collected in *The Vested Interests and the State of the Industrial Arts* (1919) and *The Engineers and the Price System* (1921). Along with much repetition of earlier ideas, they contained a new note of hope. Hitherto, as a consistent mechanist, Veblen had been scornful of reformers, including the Socialists, regarding them as men who either opposed the inevitable or needlessly strove to hasten it. Now, however, in the heady atmosphere of the war, and inspired by Jack Reed's enthusiastic tales of Russia, he believed, with amazing blindness, that a fundamental social change was immediately at hand in America, and he dreamed of becoming its Karl Marx. Not that he expected or desired anything so strenuous as a proletarian revolution. "No movement for the dispossession of the Vested Interests in America," he wrote, "can hope for even a temporary success unless it is undertaken by an organization which is competent to take over the country's productive industry as a whole, and to administer it from the start on a more efficient plan than that now pursued." Such an organization, he thought, might be created among the engineers and industrial experts, and in *The Vested Interests* he entitled one of the chapters "A Memorandum on a Practicable Soviet of Technicians." This was destined specifically to provide one of the germinating ideas in the recent movement of "Technocracy," headed by Howard Scott, an associate of Veblen's during the early twenties. More broadly, Veblen's demand for a planned economy underlay all the recent efforts in that direction, including the contemporary program of President Roosevelt and his "Brains Trust."

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But what of the projected "Soviet of Technicians"? Veblen himself had been too long a college professor not to have great dread of appearing ridiculous, and he carefully guarded himself against the charge of extravagance. "By settled habit," he wrote, "the technicians, the engineers and industrial experts, are a harmless and docile sort, well fed on the whole, and somewhat placidly content with the 'full dinner pail' which the lieutenants of the Vested Interests habitually allow them."

Even before *The Engineers and the Price System* got into print, it was evident that his hopes were utterly without foundation, the reaction was already in full swing, and the liberals were scurrying to cover, happy if they were not accused of disloyalty and treason. *The Dial* passed into other hands and became a more pompous and exotic *Little Review,* devoted to "pure art" and the latest literary fashions from abroad. Veblen taught for a while at the New School, and wrote one more book of social criticism, *Absentee Ownership and Business Enterprise in Recent Times; the Case of America,* published in 1924. It was an elegiac valedictory to the old themes. He then retired to the West, amused himself by translating the "Laxdaela Saga" from the Icelandic, became more seriously ill, and died at the age of seventy-two.

Shortly after his death, his friend, Horace Kallen, wrote, "I have a shrewd suspicion that Veblenism may be to the intellectuals of the future what Marxism has been to the humanitarians of the past." Without stopping to cavil at the use of the word "humanitarian" in connection with Marxism, one may grant this to be an interesting conjecture but scarcely more. The Veblenian vogue can hardly transcend the limitations of Veblen himself. He was a critic, not a savior, of society. His avowed aim, even at the last, never went beyond mere efficiency, and, though it is an American habit to halt there, mere efficiency is far from an adequate basis for a constructive social philosophy. Nor did he have any real conception of the forces that might achieve his desired transformation of society. He himself pointed out that not only big business and small business but also the farmers, the professional groups, and even the skilled workers in the A. F. of L. are all aligned in support of the existing order. By logical exclusion, his own allies could therefore be found only in the proletariat, but there he would not look for them. Instead, he dreamed of prying loose the engineers to create a "Soviet of Technicians" in Cloud Cuckoo Land!

By both temperament and early training, he was a rebel and sceptic, not a positive thinker or system-maker. But, one should remember, to be a great rebel and sceptic has, before this, sufficed for immortality. Especially might this well be true in a country like America which has not been richly endowed with that particular kind of genius. So far as American literature is concerned, Veblen, in his own rôle, is incomparable.

Out of his racial humiliation, personal insecurity, and practical uncertainty, Veblen forged a stylistic weapon that served him equally well for defense and for attack. Compounded of learning and irony, it frightened fools out of his garden, and protected him when the enemy appeared in overwhelming force, while in actual combat it inflicted deadly wounds. Once habituated to the strange involutions, convolutions, and circumlocutions of this heavily Latinized style, one follows it with an almost hypnotic fascination, waiting for it to condense to the inevitable poisoned epithet. A master phrase-maker, recalling in this respect Matthew Arnold but far more pungent and profound, Veblen was accustomed to sum up an argument, or a characterization of a whole historical period, or a description of some fundamental human tendency, in a concise formula, usually invidious and illuminating, such as "economic emulation," "conspicuous waste," "the kept classes" defined as those who live on "vested interests" defined in turn as the obtaining something for nothing. He was a lover of words, delighting to put them through their paces; a deliberate and careful stylist. The editors of *The Dial* long remembered Veblen's ashen anger when Robert Morss Lovett, a newcomer on the board, ventured to "correct" some of his sentences.

But Veblen was also a humorist of the straight face. Joyce himself never indulged in a better bit of satiric verbal fooling than Veblen achieved when he wrote: "If we are getting restless under the taxonomy of a monocotyledonous wage doctrine and a cryptogamic theory of interest, with involute, loculicidal, tomentous and moniform variants, what is the cytoplasm, centrosome, or karyokinetic process to which we may turn and in which we may find surcease from the metaphysics of normality and controlling principles?"

Advocates of the vernacular, such as H. L. Mencken, who once wrote a thunderous anti-Veblen diatribe, will never find him to their taste, but nonetheless Veblen's style admirably served his purposes. Both in its massive learning and in the sharp ironic sword-play in which all the learning was focalized on some immediate issue, his style like his thought was a protest against the haphazard culture of his age.

He could not shake the walls of Jericho, but he silenced its defenders. He bridled economic theory and made it ready to perform human service. He was a profound critic of American culture. We may even believe, with Lewis Mumford, that "he will come eventually to be numbered with those kings of satire who wage contention with their times' decay, and who will outlast even the tenacious institutions they seek to destroy."

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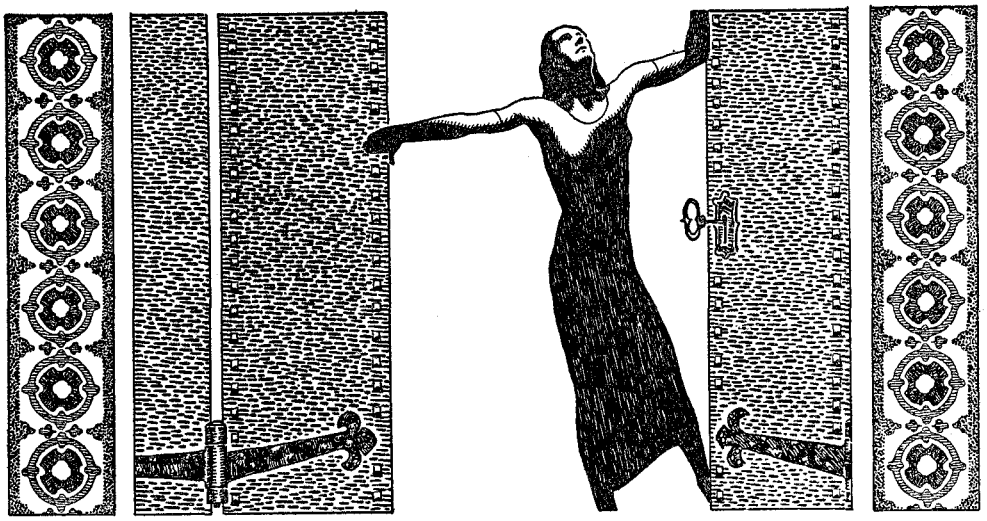

Cornered

A STORY

By Lola von Hoershelman

TAMARA, sitting at the dining-room table, was writing a letter to her American college friend. The two weeks of Christmas vacation had caused college to recede to a very distant plane in her mind, and she was having a hard time thinking of something to say. Moreover the door leading to the drawing-room was wide open, and she could not help hearing what her aunt Nina Nicolaevna and Count Serevsky were saying. For the third time Aunt Nina called out to her.

"Tamarochka, why is it that you cannot finish your letter later? Come and have some tea with Vladimir and me."

Stubbornly Tamara refused to join them.

"Really, Aunt Nina, this letter is terribly important." Which of course was not true.

Tamara could see her aunt lying curled up in the corner of a broad sofa. She looked tired. Magazines and books lay piled up on the rest of the sofa, but Aunt Nina, without removing them, had managed to make herself comfortable in her small corner. In an armchair opposite her sat Count Seversky, sipping his third glass of tea. He had stopped in on his way from work, which is to say, after ten hours of driving a taxi. His chauffeur's cap and heavy overcoat were on a chair near by. The count had had a good day. He had made more money than usual and was planning to take Tamara to the Russian Club that night. In her turn, Aunt Nina told of the strenuous morning she had had. She had been to the market early in the morning and had argued with a Russian-speaking Jew about the superiority of continental cooking to American. Then she had to carry two heavy bags of provisions home.

"In the old days in Russia, no servant would have been expected to carry such a load. Why, our cook used to go to the market followed by the kitchen-man. I remember the housekeeper complaining that they stayed away for hours."

Vladimir Seversky asked what Nina's husband, Fedor Pavlovitch, was planning to do now that he was out of work. Aunt Nina frowned as she answered:

"Well, we have written letters to every one asking for a loan at the highest rate conceivable, to be paid when we get our estates back in Russia. We wrote to them in the nicest French, too. You see, we are planning to open a gasoline station."

"Now, how does it happen that you and Fedor Pavlovitch know anything about cars and gasoline?" asked Seversky in surprise.

"We don't really. We thought maybe we could just sell the gasoline, and the customers could put it in their cars themselves."

"They might not like that," Seversky politely suggested.

Finding no retort, Nina Nicolaevna began to feel annoyed. She did not like to face difficult problems. It was just as well to trust that everything eventually would turn out for the best.

The conversation irritated Tamara. In the first place, she was feeling small pangs of conscience for not having suggested accompanying her aunt to the market; in the second place she wished Seversky would not sit there in his taxi-driver's clothes, dirty and tired. How could Aunt Nina expect her to want to marry him if he insisted on being seen at his worst? For one short frightful moment she imagined her college friends suddenly walking in to be introduced to a *taxi-driver:*

"Count Vladimir Seversky, my fiancé."

Of course he was not her fiancé, yet if Aunt Nina

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were left to manage things he would be. What was the use of her college education, what was the use of anything, if she was to become a taxi-driver's wife? If they were planning that future for her, why had they been so pleased when she won her scholarship to college? Why had they encouraged her to stay in college when, homesick and lonely, she wanted to leave after the first few weeks?

Count Seversky rose to leave. Kissing Nina Nicolaevna's hand he said:

"With your permission, I will call for Tamara about ten o'clock. Good-by till then."

Tamara offered to see him to the door. She knew her aunt would be very angry with her for having continued to write that letter after Seversky arrived. The moment the front door slammed, Nina Nicolaevna called to her. Tamara prepared for a fight. She went over and stood behind the armchair on which Seversky had been sitting. Nina Nicolaevna leaned on her elbow.

"Tamara, why were you so rude? Don't you know better than to sit and write letters when some one is paying a call?"

Tamara answered in a haughty manner:

"I don't consider that a call. One does not pay calls in an oil-stained, dusty suit."

"You know Vladimir came directly from work; how can you expect him to look otherwise? You should be flattered that a man like Vladimir Seversky thinks enough of you to stop in to ask my permission to take you out tonight."

"Aunt Nina, I don't feel flattered in the least. I don't see why you think I should be flattered. In college men much more attractive than Vladimir take me out. I think it is absurd to make such a fuss over a man who has to drive a taxi to make his living."

Nina Nicolaevna raised herself indignantly. She had become very angry.

"You stupid girl. How can you compare Seversky with your clumsy college boys—they who spend their lives on the football field and plan to step into their fathers' businesses? Seversky was a hero in the White Army; he was decorated for bravery at the age of sixteen. He ran away from home one night, made his way on foot to join the Army and stayed there till everything was over. He has fought for his country, he has shed blood for his country. What more can you ask of a man?"

Stubbornly Tamara repeated:

"That may all be true. But that was a long time ago. What is he now? He is, and he will remain, a taxi-driver."

Nina Nicolaevna raised her voice:

"Yes, a taxi-driver, but what does that mean? It is not what you do that counts, it is what you are. Seversky is high-principled, loyal, courageous. He is also intelligent and witty. Would he become more high-principled if he worked in a bank? More honorable? More kind and considerate? More devoted? Answer me, you silly girl."

Tamara threw herself into the armchair.

"Oh, what's the use, Aunt Nina? Our points of view have become entirely different. He may be high-principled and loyal, but that strikes me as old-fashioned. Yes, that's what is primarily the matter with him, he is old-fashioned—his ideas, his manners. Why, he doesn't approve of lipstick!"

For a long time Nina Nicolaevna did not answer. She seemed tired out. Finally she spoke in a very changed voice.

"Your American college has changed you a great deal, Tamara. Yes, a great deal. You have become almost a stranger. I don't understand it. You make me very unhappy."

Tamara softened immediately. Her stubborn, determined air vanished. Running across to the sofa, she hugged her aunt.

"Oh, Aunt Nina, poor Aunt Nina, please don't be unhappy. I really did not mean everything I said. It is only that . . . Oh, auntie, can't you see that all those things that you and Vladimir live by, all those things that you know and love, are dead for me—that they really never existed for me? Remember that I was only seven when we left St. Petersburg. Going to college and meeting Americans have thrown me into another life. You don't take part in it, nor Vladimir, but it is there, nevertheless. And I want to, I have to take part in this other life. Auntie, auntie, don't you see. . . ."

Nina Nicolaevna stroked Tamara's curly head, pressed it close to her.

"Yes, Tamarochka. Perhaps you are right. You are young, very young; maybe you can be happy in this other life. But when I think of the beauty and glory of the old days . . . Why, even the people were different. Men were imperious, chivalrous, and daring, the women gracious, with souls both tender and proud . . . When I remember the magnificent balls in St. Petersburg, uniforms sparkling with gold, graceful mazurkas and quadrilles, midnight suppers with gypsies and champagne or . . . Oh, Tamarachka! Do you know what it is to go hunting on a crisp, autumn morning? Mist lies on the wide fields and the grass is stiff and heavy with dew. Birch trees seem whiter than usual outlined against the black ploughed earth. Sometimes one finds tiny mushrooms in the moss which have sprung up overnight. . . ."

Nina Nicolaevna's voice broke off. Pressing Tamara still closer to her, she began to cry quietly.

When Tamara and Seversky entered the basement of a brown-stone house on 129th street, which served as

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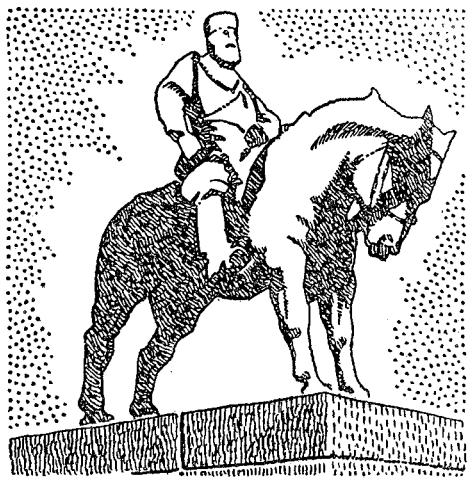
the Russian Club, the place was already crowded. Its two rooms, neither very large, were decorated with the Russian flag and pictures of the late Czar and Czarina. Tamara and Seversky passed through the room where the piano stood. Varia Televa was playing a Russian waltz, while several couples whirled around, occasionally bumping into each other. Varia Televa called out:

"Vladimir, have you brought your guitar?" Going over to her Vladimir kissed her hand.

"Yes, Varia. We will have a concert later on. But I need some vodka to put me in the right mood after a hard day's work."



Varia smiled and went on playing. The pairs whirled more quickly.

In the back room men were standing in groups. On one table there were a samovar, zakuska, and vodka. A game of petits-chevaux was going on around another. Seversky knew every one present. He shook hands and introduced Tamara to several older men who asked about her aunt and uncle. They brought her a cup of tea while Seversky poured himself some vodka. He swallowed it at one gulp and took a piece of pickled herring from a dish. Then he whispered to Tamara:

"Tamarochka, if you'd like some vodka too, go behind the screen that is around the kitchenette; I will follow you."

One of the older gentlemen was saying:

"How is it, Tamara Lvovna, that you come so seldom to our Club? Why, I don't remember seeing you since last fall."

Tamara hurriedly explained that she went to a college that was far away from New York. The gentleman shook his head.

"That won't do at all. Such a lovely young lady and locked up in a far-away college! Who has ever heard of such a thing!"

Tamara smiled apologetically.

"Well, it really isn't so bad in college. I did not like it at first, but now I don't mind it at all. We have fun there, too."

All the three gentlemen appeared unconvinced.

"No, Tamara Lvovna, it is not right for you to stay away like that. And besides what can they teach you in an American college? Believe us, nothing good can result from an American education."

They began talking about the Smolny Institute in St. Petersburg, the charming, accomplished ladies who had once been pupils there. Tamara quietly slipped away. Seversky joined her behind the kitchen screen. He held two glasses of vodka in one hand and a dill pickle in the other.

"Nothing like a salted cucumber to go with vodka. The very best thing. And a crust of black bread is necessary." He cut a slice on the kitchenette table and handed it to Tamara.

"Now we will drink to your health. Let me kiss your hand."

He bent over her hand, drank the toast, then kissed her hand again. Tamara managed to swallow her vodka and felt a pleasant, expanding warmth in her stomach. She smiled at Seversky and thought how nice he was and what wonderful green-gray eyes he had. His fingers touched her arm slightly.

"Come on, Tamarochka, it won't do to make a drunkard out of you. Let's try our luck at petits-chevaux."

They bet on different horses and lost. Then again and again and lost each time. Every one was feeling very gay and talking so loudly that one could hardly hear the numbers called out by the croupier. Maria Alexandrovna Bounoff, a friend of Tamara's and a very enthusiastic young woman, had bet on three horses and was hurrying them along by singing "Aida Troika" under her breath. Seversky stood behind Tamara. When the other players pushed against them, he slipped his hand under her elbow. Tamara, happy, leaned against him. Then she said,

"I don't think we should go on playing, Vladimir, luck is against us."

Vladimir smiled and looked into her eyes.

"Just once more, Tamarochka. We have been betting on different horses all evening. Now we will bet on the same one. It's our combined luck that we will bet on now."

Tamara watched him closely as he placed the bet. He had such nice hands with long fingers, such reckless eyes and a stern, proud mouth. Suddenly Tamara made a bargain with herself. If their combined luck won, it meant that their fate was bound together, that the right thing for her to do was to marry Vladimir. She closed her eyes and waited.

Finally Vladimir cried out:

"Our luck won! . . . Let's dance."

Varia Televa was still at the piano. When she saw Seversky entering the room, she struck some loud chords and then began playing a gypsy song. Maria Bounoff and a pale boy called Arcadi, who made his living as a house painter, ran up to Varia asking her to sing.

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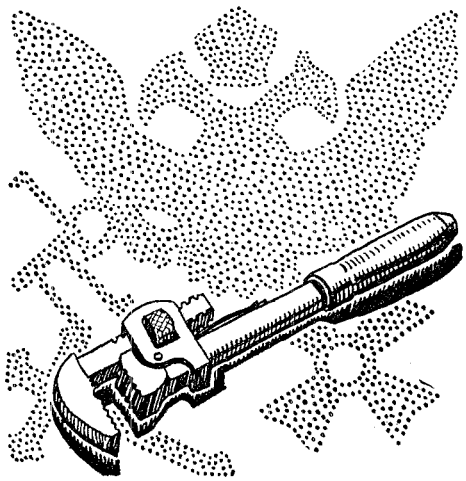
Varia threw her head back, laughed, and all of a sudden loudly picked up the wild, passionate refrain. She looked like a gypsy herself, black hair, dark skin, with this song of violent grief and tenderness pouring from her lips. The pale boy, Arcadi, joined in, but his singing was more subdued, more cautious. It was not in him to sing as the gypsies sang.

Just as suddenly as she had begun singing, Varia stopped and pushed her chair back.

"Let's drink to gypsy love!" Snatching her glass from the piano, she looked around. "Who's going to drink with me to gypsy love, Vladimir, Tamara, Arcadi, Mania—glasses! Fill your glasses, everybody! There's the wine—on that table. With red wine we will toast gypsy love!"



Seversky fetched the bottle and poured the wine. With a low bow he handed Tamara her glass.

"Well, Tamarochka, will you drink with us? You're not afraid to drink gypsy love?"

"I want to," said Tamara. Up to that moment Tamara had not been thinking of anything. It occurred to her now that she had never enjoyed being with her American friends as much. Not nearly as much. She loved all these people, every single one of them. She loved them dearly. It was surely a mistake to think that she could find happiness some place outside of their group. She belonged among them, she was part of them. Her aunt was right after all, Vladimir was right, when they said that the past was so powerful that it projected itself into the future. And it was so.

Tamara cried out joyously:

"Now we are gypsies, we all are gypsies!"

"Bravo, Varia. Bravo, Tamarochka! Another song!"

It was Prince Nassadze, the Georgian, who had entered quietly and was now clapping his hands. Tamara turned around to greet him. He kissed her hand several times, saying:

"Back from your prison, I see, and more beautiful than ever. Well, this time we won't let you leave us again. How about it, Vladimir?"

Vladimir nodded approvingly.

"That's right, Prince, tell her we prefer her as she is. American girls with lipstick and skirts above their knees are all very well. But a Russian girl should remain what she is. Here, let's drink to the Russian woman!"

He began singing the toast-song "To lovely women. . . ." Varia Televa turned to Tamara.

"Now, tell me, Tamara, why is it you have to go back to your college? Aren't you happy with us? As for me, I like to be with Americans occasionally, they are so nice and naïve and funny. They are so easily amused. But when I am sad and my spirit is searching for truth, what can they do for me? Or when my spirit is bathed in ecstasy and light, can they follow me? You know, Tamara, maybe it's a sin for me to say so, but I really think they have no souls."

Before Tamara had a chance to answer, Mania Bounoff interrupted.

"Sin or no sin, their souls are either dead or asleep within their bodies. That is a fact. They are afraid of acknowledging their souls because they are afraid to face the longing and despair a soul is capable of. But what Russian will stifle the cry of his soul. What Russian will forfeit his soul to avoid suffering?"

Weakly Tamara admitted:

"You are right, Manechka. Their souls are asleep for the most part. They are like little children, gay, irresponsible, eager for enjoyment. They take the things that are easiest to take. They do not bother about the rest. Why should they? What is the need for passionate griefs and joys, self-denial and heroism? They are kind and good and truly sympathetic. I am fond of them. It's easy to live with them. They are seldom tortured as the Russians are, but remain calm, casual and pleasant."

Tamara became very excited. Although she was certain she liked the easy, happy casualness of her American friends, she could not help admitting to herself that there was something far greater in the soul-searching, the soul-ecstasy of a Russian. One lost the one by adopting the other. What was she doing? What was happening to her? Was she forfeiting her soul? No, no, it would never do. She would not put her soul to sleep. She was a Russian and she would remain one.

Some one reminded Seversky of his guitar. He brought it while more wine was poured. Tamara sat on a sofa between Seversky and Prince Nassadze. All doubt had vanished from her mind. She was elated, happy, proud of herself. Seversky began playing and singing the song of the Black Hussars. Every one joined in the refrain. Tamara sang too, with her eyes closed, her palms pressed tightly together. The image of Old Russia with its Hussars, its reckless gaiety and reckless despair, its search for things that can never be reached, awakened in her a love, intense, overwhelming.

All the next day Tamara was happy. She laughed as she helped her aunt in the kitchen, she dusted her

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uncle's books and political pamphlets and even volunteered to put his desk in order. Her uncle led her gently away from the desk, for he would trust no one with his political papers. Nevertheless, seeing that she was so eager to please, he asked her to make him a glass of strong tea and buy a Russian newspaper. It pleased him to see Tamara happy.

"Now, my little Tamarochka, tell me, what is it that has happened to you? Can it be that you've fallen in love? Is he tall and handsome? Do his eyes flash dangerously? Who can he be?"

And Tamara laughed as she hugged her uncle.

"Sure, I'm in love. And one day soon I will elope. What will you do then, Uncle Fedor? Won't you be sorry then that you teased and made fun of me in this fashion?"

But to her aunt Nina, Tamara told everything that had happened the previous night. How after seeing her home, Vladimir had asked if he could come in for a moment and how he had proposed to her in the dark drawing-room. He had knelt in front of her armchair, pleading.

"Tamara, won't you consent to become my wife? I love you, Tamara. Without you life is not worth living. You are the one bright, happy thing that I can look forward to. Tamara, my beloved, my golden fairy-tale, my priceless treasure."

Tamara had bent down toward him, answering in a whisper.

"Yes, Vladimir. I love you, too. I will marry you . . . but not yet, not just yet. Please, let us wait a little."

Later in the afternoon Tamara was planning to call on Mrs. Televa, Varia's mother. Mrs. Televa had known Tamara's parents very well in the old days in St. Petersburg. She happened to be visiting them on their estate in the province of Tver when the Revolution broke out. While Mrs. Televa lay hidden in a haystack near by, Tamara's father and mother had been put to death by a drunken mob of peasants. Mrs. Televa had not seen Tamara since the latter was a tiny child and now, through Varia, had expressed the desire to make her acquaintance. Tamara had been putting off making the call. She knew it would revive tragic memories. Now, shielded by her new happiness, she felt strong enough to face the past.

Tamara had to wait quite a long time at the front door of the Televa apartment. She was beginning to think that no one was home when a tall girl finally opened the door.

"I am sorry to have kept you waiting so long," the tall girl apologized, "but you see I was fixing the hem of my skirt. I had it off. I had to put it on again. Do come in."

They entered a dark hall and the girl had to take Tamara's hand to prevent her from knocking into something. She led her to the door of the sitting-room and drew aside to let her pass. There, on an untidy couch, her feet covered by a piece of steamer-rug, lay Mrs. Televa. On seeing Tamara she lifted her head from the pile of pillows and with obvious difficulty sat up on the couch.

"I'm so glad you came," she said, talking slightly above a whisper. "I'm so very glad you came. You will forgive me for lying down again."

She stretched out a yellow, shaking hand toward Tamara, then fell back onto the couch.

"That's my eldest daughter, Katia," she added, looking at the tall girl.

Tamara shook hands with Katia, who had already settled herself comfortably in a dilapidated armchair, her legs tucked under her. Looking at her closely Tamara realized that Katia was but a very young girl in spite of her sunken eyes and wrinkled face. Tamara addressed her, for she did not know what to say to the old woman.

"Please go on mending your hem. Don't let me be in your way. Maybe I can help you?"

Katia shrugged her shoulders indifferently.

"Oh, thanks. It will do as it is. I only began doing it because Mother has been reminding me about it for a whole week."

The old woman on the couch smiled feebly.

"Yes, that's how it is. She has to wear the same old skirt week in, week out. She does not even bother to mend the hem. That's what it is to be poor."

She beckoned to Tamara to sit closer to the couch.

"I want to get a good look at you. You are very grown-up already. You know I saw you last as a very little child. Your nurse brought you down into the drawing-room for a while, I remember. Your mother was very proud of your curls. Such pretty brown curls with a pink bow on them as big as your little head."

Tamara nodded.

"Yes, I also remember the big bows I used to wear. I was very fond of them. Especially a green one that some one gave me and my nurse would not let me wear."

Mrs. Televa reached out for a cigarette. She smoked steadily one cigarette after another, and her fingers were

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brown from tobacco-stain. Her teeth were brown, too, and there were very few of them left. Instead of holding the cigarette between her teeth she seemed to be continually sucking it. Tamara tried not to watch her.

"Katia." Mrs. Televa turned to her daughter. "What are you thinking about? Go and make some tea."

Katia got up with a sigh and shambled across the room. She returned presently with the tea things and began placing them on the table.

"Now, Katia, Katiusha, haven't you any shame left?" started in the old woman again. "Brush the crumbs off the tablecloth first."

"Oh, Mother, what's the difference? There will be more soon, anyway, and then I'll brush them all off at once."

She moved her armchair to the table and sat down listlessly. Tamara offered to pour the tea. Mrs. Televa, leaning forward, stroked her arm.

"Yes, thank you. That will be very nice. I used to pour the tea but now I can't any more, my hands shake. See how my hands shake."

Tamara went over to the table quickly. There were a few minutes of silence. Then the old woman said:

"Katiusha is now painting scarfs."

"Yes, I'm painting scarfs. . . . Not very cheerful. . . . Yes, nothing's very gay."

Tamara asked pleasantly, "But isn't it rather fun to paint scarfs? All those colors and designs. . . ."

"No. One's back hurts from always bending. You see, one has to stand bending over a table."

Words seemed to fall from Katia's lips as if by accident. The expression of her face never changed. Only her fingers were in continual motion, it was as if they were picking at things.

"It's about time for my other daughter to come home. You know, Varia works in a beauty parlor and sometimes she is detained till late in the evening." Mrs. Televa made a weak, despondent gesture with both her hands. "Lord, Lord, have mercy upon us!"

Tamara drank her tea and ate a few stale crackers, all the while trying to think of something cheerful to say. She wanted very badly to say something cheerful.

The old lady had suddenly grown restless and fretful.

"Katia," she called out in her hoarse half-whisper, "Katia, but where is your brother till now?"

Katia gave a strained little laugh.

"Where can he be if not at his billiards?"

"It's awful, simply awful," the mother complained to Tamara. "He used to be such a nice boy, my Kostenka, always stayed home reading books or playing the piano. Every one thought he was very gifted. He would sing folk-songs in such a sweet, sad little voice that one could hardly keep the tears away. Old gray-haired men like Petr Ivanovitch sobbed when he sang 'Good-bye Mother-Russia.' . . . And then all of a sudden something happened. I don't know what it is that happened to him. But he just stays away and plays billiards. Every day he plays billiards and I don't know where he gets the money to play."

She was silent for a moment, then repeated: "He used to be such a nice, quiet little boy. And so talented. Why, do you know he is not yet seventeen? God's will be done. . . . He knows best. . . ."

"Yes, it isn't very gay," Katia let fall from her lips.

Tamara leaned forward across the tea-table.

"Maybe the songs he sang were too sad, maybe he has become tired of being sad. Billiards seem gayer to him. Young boys need to be carefree and happy. It won't last, he will come back to you."

Mrs. Televa scarcely listened to Tamara, so engrossed had she become in her thoughts. She suddenly sat up and stretched her arms out.

"Lord, why did you punish me so cruelly? Why did you entrust me with a mission that I am too weak to carry through? I am too weak and ill to take care of my children any longer, to guide them, to keep them away from evil. And the glorious day may yet be far, the glorious day when we will all return to Russia, suffering, patient, Holy Russia. The church bells will start ringing again in every city and village. It will be just as on an Easter Sunday. And then I will die in peace knowing that my beloved ones are safe."

Katia stared at her mother indifferently. After a while she suggested, "You know, Mother, Tamara will never come to see us again if you are going to depress her."

Mrs. Televa turned wistfully to Tamara.

"You will forgive a poor old woman for being sad, won't you? You are young, you can forget all the sad things, but for me there is no forgetting. Come and sit near me again for a moment. You are so pretty, you are like your poor mother. The same blue, corn-flower blue, eyes. I hope America has not changed you. I hope you will be able to return one day to Russia just as sacredly Russian as you left."

Very soon after, Tamara took leave without waiting for Varia and Kostenka.

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Unnerved and depressed by her visit, Tamara almost ran home. It seemed to her that Varia's mother and sister were pursuing her. She could not get rid of their image: the old woman with her brownish teeth and fingers, her thin, untidy knot of hair, and hands that could no longer pour the tea, and, slouched at her side, the listless girl, Katia, her skin puffed and yellow under the eyes. Beaten, helpless, they could not take part in the life about them. They shrank from it, hid in their dark corner. Could one blame them for seeking comfort in memories and insane hopes? How else would they dare go on living? But what had she, Tamara, in common with them? She was young and strong and willing to cope with reality. The past had perished, but the present, the future were there to be fought with. Out of them she would wring her happiness. Full of challenge and determination Tamara threw her head back, straightened herself, smiled. Then she remembered Vladimir Seversky. A dumb fear gripped her suddenly. She stopped in the middle of the street, not knowing what to do, where to go. Her house was just a few steps away but she could not bear to face her aunt and uncle and, above all, her fiancé . . . Her fiancé . . . Count Seversky, the taxi-driver. Tears were burning her eyes, tears of self-pity and fear. She did not even wipe them. What would become of her, married to Vladimir? Backwards she would follow him, step by step, renouncing the life she had been struggling toward. She would seek refuge in impotent hopes and dreams along with the rest of them who had not the strength to face realities. The greater her love for him and his for her, the sooner she would find herself helplessly cornered. Oh, if she could only run away! Run away and break herself free. And why not? She would immediately call up her American friend, Janet Tally. She would stay with her till it was time to go back to college. Later she would write a letter to her aunt and uncle, asking their forgiveness, explaining everything, and one to Vladimir, gentle, sorrowful, telling him that she could not live his life. Tamara hurried to the drugstore across the street.

"Tamarochka, where is it you are hurrying to?" Vladimir was at her side, smiling and happy. "Nina Nicolaevna and I have been waiting for you. Then I ran out to get some cigarettes. What kind do you smoke?"

He took Tamara's arm, and she had not the strength to pull herself away. Silently she allowed herself to be led. She waited while he bought the cigarettes, and then they turned home together.

"There is to be a poker game at your house tonight, Tamarochka. Let us hurry. Your aunt is waiting for you to help her put the drawing-room in order."

Tamara pressed her tired, unhappy head for a moment against Vladimir's shoulder. Then she asked desperately:

"Do I really matter a great deal to you, Vladimir? A great, great deal?"

Vladimir Seversky answered solemnly, "You are life itself for me, Tamarochka."

There was nothing more she dared say.

Half an hour later Tamara was carefully dusting the portraits of the czars that covered the walls of the drawing-room. She did not forget to wipe the snuff-box on the mantelpiece, a gift of Catherine the Great to one of Tamara's great-great-grandfathers. Count Seversky helped Uncle Fedor with the vodka for the poker party.

ISRAEL

By Robert Nathan

These are the chosen people. He has set
Upon their brow the diadem of thorn,
The one imperishable coronet,
The crown of pain, the briar branch of scorn.
Around their shoulders He has hung His scrolls,
The desert-dark, and yellow as the light;
His is the voice of ages in their souls,
The burning bush, the pillar in the night.
These are the chosen; He has named them all.
None can escape the poison of His grace,
Or ever ease the everlasting smart.
It is for them, the honey and the gall,
To be the wakeful, the abiding race,
And guard the wells of pity of the heart.

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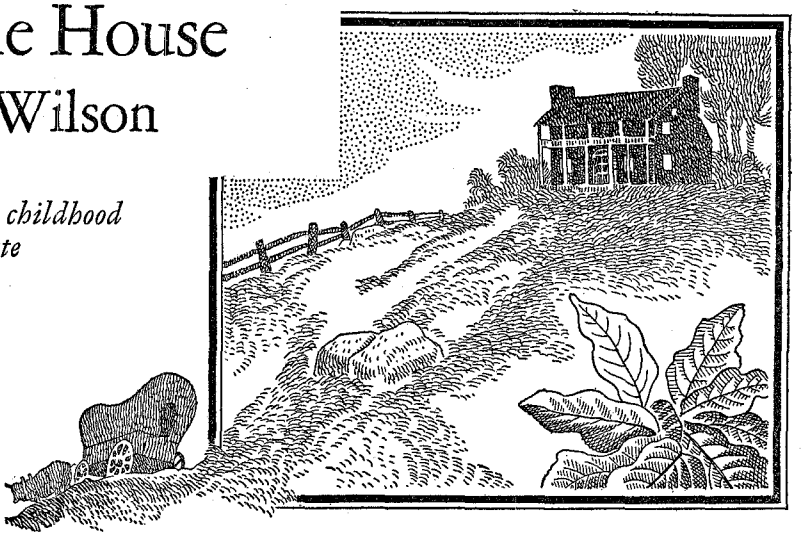
LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES

The Old Stone House

By Edmund Wilson

An author returns to a familiar childhood haunt in New York State



As I go north for the first time in years in the slow, the constantly stopping, milk train, which carries passengers only in the back part of the hind car and has an old stove to heat it in winter, I look out through the dirt-yellowed double pane and remember how once, as a child, I had felt thwarted till I had gotten the windows up so that there should be nothing between me and the widening pastures, the boulders, the black and white cattle, the rivers stony and thin, the lone elms like feather dusters, the high air which sharpens all outlines, makes all colors so breath-takingly vivid, in the clear light of late afternoon.

The little stations again: Barneveld, Stittville, Steuben—a tribute to the Prussian soldier who helped drill our troops for the Revolution. The woman behind me in the train talks to the conductor with a German accent. They came over here for land and freedom.

Boonville: that pale boxlike building, clear gray, with three floors of slots that look in on darkness and a roof like a flat overlapping lid—cold, dark, clear air, fresh water. Like nothing else but upstate New York. Rivers stony and thin, or deeper and dark—where do they go? I used to love to follow them—should still. A fresh breath of water off the Black River where the blue closed gentians grow.

There was never any train to Talcottville. Our house was the centre of the town. It is strange to get back now: it seems not quite like anything else I have ever known. But is this merely the apparent uniqueness of places associated with childhood? The settlers of this part of New York were a first westward migration from New England. At the end of the eighteenth century they drove ox-teams from Connecticut and Massachusetts over into the wild northern country below Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence, and they established here an extension of New England.

Yet an extension that was already something new. I happened last week to be in Ipswich, Mass., the town from which my grandfather's family came over here; and, for all the pride of white houses with green blinds kept bright with new paint, I was oppressed by the crampedness of Boston. Even the House of the Seven Gables, which stimulated the imagination of Hawthorne, though it is grim perhaps, is not romantic. It, too, has the tightness and self-sufficiency of that little provincial merchant society, which at its best produced an intense little culture, English in its concreteness and practicality—as the block letters of the signs along the docks make Boston look like Liverpool. But life must have hit its head on the ceilings of those close little coops. That narrowness, that meagerness, that stinginess, still grips New England today: the drab summer cottages along the shore seem almost as slit-windowed and pinched as the gray twin houses of a mill-town like Fall River or Lawrence. I can feel the relief myself of coming away from Boston to these first uplands of the Adirondack wilderness, where, sustained by the New England religion, still speaking the language of New England, the settlers found limitless space. They were a part of the new America, now forever for a century on the move.

They moved on before they had been able to build here anything comparable to the civilization of New England. The country, magnificent and vast, has never really been humanized as New England has: the landscape still overwhelms the people. But this house, the only one of its kind among farms and wooden towns of later periods, was an attempt to found a civilization. And it blends, therefore, in a peculiar fashion the amenities of the eastern seaboard with the rudeness and toughness of the frontier.

It was begun in 1800 and took four years in the building. The stone had to be quarried out of the banks of Sugar River, close by, beside the falls. The walls of the house were a foot and a half thick, and the plaster was applied to the stone without any intervening lattice. The beams were secured by enormous nails, made by hand and some of them eighteen inches long. Solid and simple as a fortress, the place has also the charm of something which people have had made to order for themselves. There is a front porch with white wooden columns which support a white wooden balcony, running along the second floor. The roof comes down close over the balcony, and the balcony and the porch are draped with vines. Large ferns grow along the porch, and there are stone hitching posts and curious stone ornaments, cut out of the quarry like the house: on one side, a big stone bowl in which red geraniums bloom,

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and on the other, an unnamable object, crudely sculptured and vaguely pagoda-like. The front door has real beauty: the door itself is dark green with a brass knocker, and the woodwork is white: it is crowned by a wide fanlight and flanked by two narrow panes of glass in which a white filagree of wood makes a webbing like ice on winter ponds. At one side of the house, where the mortar has come off the stone, there is a dappling of dark gray under light gray like the dappling of light in shallow water, and the feathers of the elms make dapplings of sun among their shadows of large lace along the grass.

The lawn is ungraded and uneven like the pastures, and it merges eventually with the fields. Behind, there are great clotted masses of myrtle beds, lilac bushes, pink phlox and other things I can't identify; pink and white hollyhocks, some of them leaning, fine blue and purple dye of larkspur; a considerable vegetable garden with long rows of ripe gooseberries and currants, a patch of yellow pumpkin flowers and raspberries, both red and white—among which are sprinkled the little flimsy poppies, orange, white, red, and pink. In an old dark red barn where the hayloft is almost collapsing, I find spinning wheels, a carder, candle molds, a patent bootjack, obsolete implements of carpentry, little clusters of baskets for berry-picking, and a gigantic pair of scales, such as is nowadays usually seen only in the hands of allegorical figures.

The house was built by the Talcotts, after whom the town is named. They owned the large farm in front of the house, which stretches down to the river and beyond. They also built a grist-mill, but were thought—I learn from the county history—to have "adopted a policy adverse to the building up of the village at the point where natural advantages greatly favored," for they "refused to sell village lots to mechanics, and retained the water power on Sugar River, although parties offered to invest liberally in manufactures." In time, there was only one Talcott left, an old maid. My great-grandfather Baker, who lived across the street and had been left by the death of his first wife with a son and eight daughters, came over and married Miss Talcott. She was kind to the children, and they remembered her with affection. Great-grandfather Baker owned the quarry on the river just a little way from the house.

Most of the daughters, of whom my grandmother was one—"six of them beauties," I am told—got married and went away. There was only one left in the house when I first remember Talcottville, my great-aunt Rosalind, the spinster daughter who was invariably included in the big old-fashioned families and whose rôle was to stay home and take care of her parents. Aunt "Lin" had devoted her life to her father. When I knew her, she was very old. It was impressive and rather frightening to call on her—you did it only by special arrangement, as she had to prepare herself to be seen. She would be beautifully dressed in a lace cap, a lavender dress and a white crocheted shawl, but she had become so bloodless and shrunken as dreadfully to resemble a mummy and reminded you uncomfortably of Miss Haversham in Dickens's *Great Expectations*. She had a certain high and formal coquetry and was the only person I ever knew who talked like the people in old novels. When she had been able to get about, I am told, she had been in the habit of treating the townspeople with a condescension almost baronial. According to the family legend, the great-grandmother of great-grandmother Baker had been a daughter of one of the Earls of Essex, who had eloped with a gardener to America.

Another of my Baker grand-aunts, whom I found one of the most interesting members of the family, had married and lived in the town and known tragic disappointments. Only intellectual interests and a mind capable of philosophic pessimism had maintained her through the wreck of her domestic life. She used to tell me how, as a young married woman, she had taught herself French by the dictionary and grammar, sitting up at night alone by the stove through one of their cold and dark winters. She had read a great deal of French, subscribed to French magazines, without being able to pronounce a word. She had rejected revealed religion and did not believe in immortality; and when she considered that she had been relieved of the last of her family obligations, though her hair was now beginning to turn gray, she came on to New York City and lived there alone—her husband had left her an income from investments in Adirondack real estate—occupying herself with the theatre, reading, visits to her nieces, and all the spectacle and talk of the great world which she loved so much and from which she had spent so many years removed. At last, when she was old and had no longer the strength to live in the city, she came back, not without bitterness, to Talcottville, and died there in her house alone.

Only the youngest of the family was left then, the son, my great-uncle Tom. His mother must have been worn out with child-bearing—she died after the birth of this ninth child—and he had not turned out so well as the others. He had been born with no roof to his mouth and had to wear a gold palate, and it was difficult to understand him. He was not precisely simple-minded—he held a small political job under Cleveland and he usually beat you at checkers—but he was childlike and ill-equipped to deal with life in any very effective way. He sold the farm to a German and the quarry to the town. Then he died, and the house was empty, except when my mother and father would come here to open it up for a month or two in the summer.

I have not been back here in years, and I have never before examined the place carefully. It has become for me something like a dream—unreal with the powerful impressions of childhood. Even now that I am here again, I have to shake off the dream. I walk through the rooms with a strange combination of uneasiness, complacency, and depression.

These rooms are admirably proportioned; the white mantelpieces are elegant and chaste, and each is ornamented differently. The big living-room seems a little bare because the various members of the family have claimed and taken away so many things; and there are some cheap curtains and disagreeable carpets brought in by my great-uncle's wife, a woman with hideous false teeth, of whom the family never approved—though it was admitted he had not done badly for a man with a metal palate and that she had made him an excellent wife. But here are all the things they have in the antique stores: "How like an antique store!" I find I keep thinking. Red Bohemian glass decanters; a rusty silver snuff-box; a mirror with the American eagle painted

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at the top of the glass. A set of curly-maple furniture, deep seasoned yellow smooth as satin; little mahogany tables with slim legs; a yellow comb-backed rocker, with a design of green conch-shells like snails. A small bust of Dante with the nose chipped; a little old-fashioned organ stored here years ago by the church and never afterwards reclaimed. Large engravings of the family of Washington and of the Reformers Presenting their Famous Protest before the Diet of Spires; a later engraving of Charles Dickens. Old tongs and poker, impossibly heavy. A brown mahogany desk inlaid with yellow birdwood, with a pair of old steel-rimmed spectacles and a thing to shake sand on wet ink. Daguerreotypes in fancy cases: they last better than photographs—my grandmother looks fresh and cunning—I remember hearing that when my grandfather first saw her, she was riding on a load of hay—he came back up here to marry her as soon as he had gotten his medical degree. An old wooden flute, brought over from New England—I remember my great-uncle's telling me—in one of the original ox-team loads—he used to get a lonely piping out of it—I try it, but cannot make a sound. Two big oval paintings in gold frames of landscapes mountainous and romantic: they came from the Utica house of great-grandfather Baker's brother—he married a rich wife and invented excelsior and was presented with a solid silver table service by the grateful city of Utica.

Wall-paper molded by the damp from the stone; uninviting old black hair-cloth furniture. A bowl of those enormous upcountry sweet-peas, incredibly fragrant and bright—they used to awe and trouble me—why?

In the dining-room, a mahogany china-closet, which, in the days when letters were few and great-grandfather Baker was postmaster, used to be the village post-office. My grandmother's pewter tea-service with its design of oak-leaves and acorns, which I remember from her house in New Jersey. Black iron cranes, black pipkins and kettles, for cooking over the hearth; a kind of flat iron pitchfork for lifting the bread in and out when they baked at the back of the fireplace. On the sideboard, a decanter with a gilt black-letter label: "J. Rum." If there were only some Jamaica Rum in the decanter!—if the life of the house were not all past!—The kitchens that trail out behind are almost too old-smelling and deserted—in spite of the wonderful big brown crocks with blue long-tailed birds painted on them, a different bird on each crock.

In the ample hall with its long staircase, two large colored pictures of trout, one rising to bait, one leaping. Upstairs, a wooden pestle and mortar; a perforated tin box for hot coals that people took to keep their feet warm on sleigh-rides or in church; a stuffed heron; a horrible bust of my cousin Dorothy which her mother had had done of her in Germany, larger than life and with the hair-ribbon and ruffles faithfully reproduced in marble—Cousin Dorothy, who got to detest it, took it out and threw it into the pond, but Uncle Tom quietly dredged it up and carefully replaced it on its pedestal. An ugly chair with a round rag back; an ugly bed with the head of Columbus sticking out above the pillows like a figurehead. Charming old bedquilts with patterns of rhomboids in softened brown, greens and pinks or of blue polka-dotted hearts that ray out on stiff phallic stalks. A footstool innocently covered in white, which, however, when you step on a tab at the side, opens up into a spittoon. (There used to be a musical chair, brought back from Germany along with the bust, but it seems to have disappeared.) A jar of dried rose leaves and a jar of little pebbles and shells that keep their bright colors in alcohol.

The old panes up here have wavy lines in the glass. There are cobweb-filthy books, which I examine: many religious works, the annals of the state legislature, a book called "The Young Wife, or Duties of Women in the Marriage Relation," published in Boston in 1838 and containing a warning against tea and coffee, which "loosen the tongue, fire the eye, produce mirth and wit, excite the animal passions, and lead to remarks about ourselves and others, that we should not have made in other circumstances, and which it were better for us and the world, never to have made." But there is also, I noticed downstairs, Grant Allan's "The Woman Who Did," from 1893.

I come upon the History of Lewis County and read it with a certain pride. I say to myself that it is an excellent piece of work—admirably full in its chapters on geology, flora and fauna and politics; diversified with anecdotes and biographies never over-flattering and often pungent; and written in a sound English style. Could any one in the county today, I wonder, command such a sound English style? I note with gratification that the bone of a prehistoric cuttlefish, discovered in one of the limestone caves of the river, is the largest of its kind on record, and that a flock of wild swans was seen here in 1821. In the eighties, there were still wolves and panthers. There are still bears and deer today.

I also look into the proceedings of the New York State assembly. My great-grandfather Baker was primarily a politician and at that time a member of the assembly. I have heard that he was a Jacksonian Democrat and that he made a furious scene when my grandmother came back from New Jersey and announced that she had become a Republican: it spoiled her whole visit. There is a photograph of him in an oval gilt frame, with his hair sticking out in three great spikes and a wide and declamatory mouth. I look into the record of the assembly to see what rôle great-grandfather Baker played. It is the forties; the Democrats are still savage about the United States Bank. But when I look up great-grandfather Baker in the index, it turns out that he figured solely, though repeatedly, as either not being present or as requesting leaves of absence. They tell me that he used to go West to buy cattle.

That sealed-up space on the second floor which my father had knocked out—who did they tell me was hidden in it?—a soldier? I see by one of the new historical road-signs that there are caves somewhere here where slaves were hidden. Maybe it was part of the underground route for smuggling Negroes over the border.—Is the attic, the "kitchen chamber," which is always so suffocating in summer, still full of carpet-bags and crinolines and beaver-hats in the cowhide-covered trunks? We used to dress up in them for charades.

It was the custom for the married Baker daughters to bring their children back here in the summer; and their children in time brought their children. In those days, how I used to love coming up here! It was a reunion with cousins from Boston and New York, Ohio and Wisconsin; we fished and swam in the

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rivers, had all sorts of games and excursions.—Later on, I got to dislike it: the older generation died, the younger ceased to come back. I wanted to be elsewhere, too. The fulness with life of the past, the memory of the many families of cousins and uncles and aunts, made the emptiness of the present more oppressive.—Isn't it still?—didn't my gloom come from that, the night of my first arrival?—Wasn't it the dread of it that kept me away?—I am aware, as I walk through the rooms, of the amplitude and completeness of the place—the home of a large old-fashioned family, which had to be a city in itself. And not merely did it house a clan: the whole life of the community passed through it. Situated in the corner of the cross-roads, it has been postoffice and town hall—at one time great-grandfather Baker put up travellers on the Albany post-road. And now for five-sixths of the year it is nothing more than a shell full of antiques, with no intimate relation to a community.

The community itself today is half the size of the community of those days, and its condition is very much changed. It has become merely one of the clusters of houses that people shoot through along the state highway; and there will presently perhaps be little left but our house confronting the hot-dog stand and the gas station.

For years I have had a recurrent dream. I take a road toward the west; it is summer; I pass by a strange summer forest; if I am lucky and find the way, I arrive at a marvellous river: the greenness of the country seems fresh and light; there are alders and wild high trees; among enormous pale gray boulders one can sit on naked in the sun are deep running pools to swim in; it is the place I have always longed for, the place of wildness and freedom, the place of unalloyed delight. As I walk about Talcottville now, I discover that the mysterious forest is a big grove which even in the daytime used to be lonely and dark and where great white Canadian violets used to grow out of the deep black leaf-mould. Today it is no longer dark because half the trees have been cut down. The river in the dream turns out to have been the farther and less frequented and more adventurous bank of Sugar River, which had to be reached by wading. Both river and forest are west of the main road, which accounts for my always taking that direction in my dream. I remember how Sugar River used to fascinate me so that I had the photographs of it I had taken enlarged and kept them in my room all winter. Today the hither bank has been completely blasted out to get stone for the new state highway, and what we used to call "the little falls" is gone.

I visit the house of my grand-aunt, and my gloom returns and overwhelms me. The huge root of an elm has split the thick slabs of the pavement so that you have to walk over a hump; and one of the big square stone fence-posts is toppling. Her flowers, with no one to tend them, go on raggedly blooming in their seasons. There has been nobody in her house since she died. It is all too appropriate to her pessimism—that dead end she always foresaw. As I walk around the house, I remember how, sitting on the back porch, she once sang me old English ballads, including that gruesome one, "Oh, where have you been, Randall, my son?" about the man who had gone to "Pretty Peggy's" house and been given snakes to eat:

"What had you for supper, Randall, my son?"

"Fresh fish fried in butter. Oh, make my bed soon!
For I'm sick at my heart and I fain would lie down!"

She was old then and dumpy and round-shouldered after the years when she had looked so handsome, straight-backed and with the fashionable aigrette in her hair. And that ballad seemed to have been drawn out of such shadowy reaches of the past, out of something so surprisingly different from the college women's hotels in New York in which I had always known her as living: that England to which, far though she had come from it, she was yet so much closer than I, that old world of legend which I read about in books but with which I was not used to being put in direct relation—for she sang it without a smile, completely possessed by its spirit—that it made my flesh creep and disconcerted me.

My great-aunt is dead, and all her generation are dead—and the new generations of the family have long ago left Talcottville behind and have turned into something quite different. They were already headed for the cities by the middle of the last century, as can be seen by the rapid dispersal of great-grandfather Baker's daughters. Yet there were a few, within my memory, who stayed on in this country as farmers. They were very impressive people, the survivors of a sovereign race who owned their own pastures and fields and governed their own community. Today their descendants perform minor functions in a machine which they do not control. They have most of them become thoroughly urbanized, and they are even farther from great-grandfather Baker than my grandmother, his daughter, was when she came back from New Jersey a Republican. One of her children, a retired importer in New York, was complaining to me the other day that the outrageous demands of the farmers were making business recovery impossible, and protesting that if the advocates of the income tax had their way, the leading people would no longer be able to live up to their social positions. A cousin, named after his original ancestor who came over to New York from Ipswich, a mining engineer on the Coast and a classmate and admirer of Hoover, invested and has lost heavily in Mexican real estate and the industrial speculation of the boom. Another, with another of the old county names, is now at the head of an organization whose frankly avowed purpose is to rescue the New York manufacturers from taxation and social legislation. He has seen his native city of Utica ruined by the removal of its textile mills to the South, where taxes are lighter and labor is cheaper; and he is honestly convinced that his efforts are directed to the promotion of civic health and betterment. When I see him, he laments the modern enslavement of the Americans to material things, and ascribes our present crisis to the indifference of the best people to public affairs. He tells me that he and I are working toward the same goal and that it is merely our approaches to it which differ.

Thus the family has come imperceptibly to identify its interests with those of what great-grandfather Baker would have called the "money power." They work for it and acquiesce in it—they are no longer the sovereign race of the first settlers of Lewis County and in the cities they have achieved no sovereignty. They are much too scrupulous and decent and their tastes are too compara-

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tively simple for them ever to have gotten away, during the years of expansion and plunder, with any conquests of real importance. They have still the frank accent and the friendly eye of the older American world, and they seem a little taken aback by the turn which things have been taking.

And what about me? As I come back in the train, I find that—other causes contributing—my depression of Talcottville deepens. I did not find the river and the forest of my dream—I did not find the romance of the past. I have been too close to the past: there in that house, in that remote little town which has never known any industrial progress since the Talcotts first obstructed the development of the water power of Sugar River, you can see exactly how rural Americans lived a century and a half ago. And who would go back to it? Not I. Let people who have never known country life complain that the farmer has been spoiled by his radio and his Ford. Along with the memory of exaltation at the immensity and freedom of that countryside, I have also the memory of horror at its loneliness: a family I knew well burned one night in their house, where there was no fire department to save them, and husbands and wives left behind by death—the dark nights and the prisoning winters. I do not grudge the sacrifice of the Sugar River falls for the building of the new state highway and I do not resent the hot-dog stand. I am at first a little shocked at the sight of a transformer on the road between Talcottville and Boonville, but when I get to the Talcottville house, I am obliged to be thankful for it—no more oil-lamps in the evenings! And I would not go back to that old life if I could: that civilization—why idealize it?—was too lonely, too poor, too provincial.

I look out across the Hudson and see Newburgh: the little neat-windowed cubes of its dwellings and docks, distinct as if cut by a burin, built dense up the slope of the bank with an occasional simple steeple, undwarfed by the bulk of modern buildings and with only the little old-fashioned ferry to connect them with the opposite bank, might be still an eighteenth-century city. My father's mother came from over there. She was the grand-daughter of a carpet importer from Rotterdam. From him came the big thick Spanish coins which the children of my father's family were supposed to cut their teeth on. The business, which had been a considerable one, declined as the sea trade of the Hudson became concentrated in New York. My father and mother, when they went years ago to visit the old store by the docks, were amazed to find a solitary old clerk scratching up a few odd orders and sales on a slate that hung behind the counter.

And the old slate and the Spanish silver, representing though they do a kind of life slightly different from that evoked by Talcottville, associate themselves in my mind with such things as the old post-office turned china-closet. And as I happen to be reading Herndon's Life of Lincoln, that, too, goes to flood out the vision with its extension still further west, still further from the civilized seaboard, of the life of the early frontier. Through Herndon's extraordinary memoir, one of the few really great American books of its kind, which America has never accepted, preferring to it the sentimentalities of Carl Sandburg and the ladies who write Lincoln Christmas books—the past appears to me even more immediately than through the daguerreotypes and bootjacks of Talcottville and makes me even more uneasy. Here you are back again inescapably amid the poverty and the crudeness of the frontier, and here is a man of genius coming out of it and perfecting himself in spite of it. The spectacle is not merely moving but agonizing. The boorish boy from the settler's clearing with nobody and nothing behind him, hoping that his grandfather had been a planter as my great-aunt Rosalind hoped that she was a descendant of the Earls of Essex, the morbid young man looking passionately toward the refinement and the training of the East but unable to bring himself to marry the women who represented it for him—rejoining across days in country stores, nights in godforsaken hotels—rejoining by heroic self-discipline the creative intelligence of the race to find himself the conscious focus of its terrible unconscious parturition—his miseries burden his grandeur. At least they do for me at this moment.

"Old Abe Lincoln came out of the wilderness,
Out of the wilderness, out of the wilderness—"

The song comes back and awes me—the thought of Lincoln becomes almost unbearable.

Great-grandfather Baker's politics and the old Talcottville general store where people sat around and talked before the new chain store took its place—Lincoln's school was not so very different. And I would not go back to that.

Yet as I walk up the steps of my house in New York, I recognize suddenly with a sinking that I have never been able to leave it. This old wooden booth I have taken between First and Second Avenues—what is it but the same old provincial America? And as I open the door with its loose knob and breathe the musty sour smell of the stair carpet, it seems to me that I have not merely stuck in the same place but actually lost ground. This gray paintless clapboarded front, these lumpy and rubbed yellow walls—they were probably once respectable but they must always have been commonplace. They have never had even the dignity and distinction of the house in Lewis County. But I have rented them because, before I came to live in New York, I had been used to living in houses and have grown to detest small apartments.

So here is where I live: in an old cramped frame house, having failed even worse than my relatives at getting out of the American big business era the luxuries and the prestige which I should unquestionably very much have enjoyed. Here is where I end by living—among the worst instead of the best of this society—the sordid and unhealthy children of my sordid and unhealthy neighbors who howl outside my windows night and day. It is this—there is no doubt about it!—which has been rankling and causing my gloom: to have left that early world behind, yet never to have made myself quite comfortable in what was till yesterday the new.

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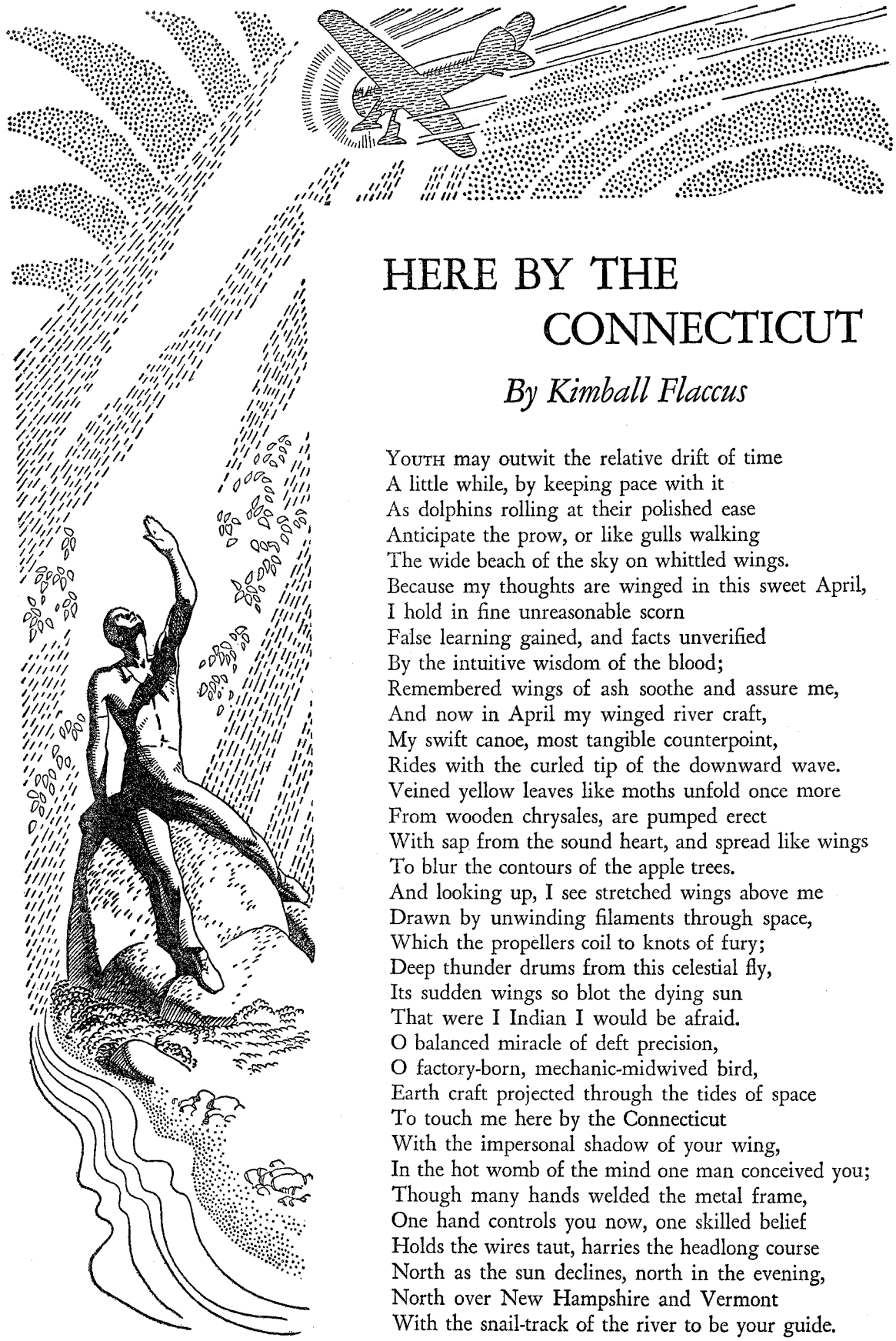

HERE BY THE CONNECTICUT

By Kimball Flaccus

Youth may outwit the relative drift of time
A little while, by keeping pace with it
As dolphins rolling at their polished ease
Anticipate the prow, or like gulls walking
The wide beach of the sky on whittled wings.
Because my thoughts are winged in this sweet April,
I hold in fine unreasonable scorn
False learning gained, and facts unverified
By the intuitive wisdom of the blood;
Remembered wings of ash soothe and assure me,
And now in April my winged river craft,
My swift canoe, most tangible counterpoint,
Rides with the curled tip of the downward wave.
Veined yellow leaves like moths unfold once more
From wooden chrysales, are pumped erect
With sap from the sound heart, and spread like wings
To blur the contours of the apple trees.
And looking up, I see stretched wings above me
Drawn by unwinding filaments through space,
Which the propellers coil to knots of fury;
Deep thunder drums from this celestial fly,
Its sudden wings so blot the dying sun
That were I Indian I would be afraid.
O balanced miracle of deft precision,
O factory-born, mechanic-midwived bird,
Earth craft projected through the tides of space
To touch me here by the Connecticut
With the impersonal shadow of your wing,
In the hot womb of the mind one man conceived you;
Though many hands welded the metal frame,
One hand controls you now, one skilled belief
Holds the wires taut, harries the headlong course
North as the sun declines, north in the evening,
North over New Hampshire and Vermont
With the snail-track of the river to be your guide.

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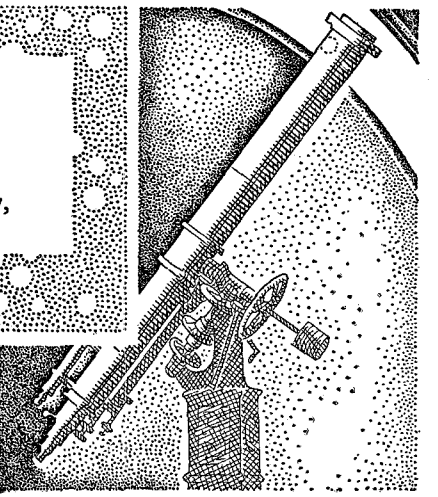
STRAWS IN THE WIND

Significant notes in world affairs today

Science's New Certainty

By George W. Gray

A strange atmosphere of indefiniteness pervades the physical sciences today, the certainty of uncertainty.



Will water run uphill? Will a teakettle freeze on a red-hot stove? Can a man lift himself by his boot straps? Today's answer to such nonsense is not the sweeping "No!" of a few years ago, but the tolerant, "Possibly, if you wait long enough."

Perhaps nothing is more suggestive of the strange atmosphere of indefiniteness that pervades the physical sciences today than the current interest in perpetual motion. Recent events have schooled us to expect imbecilities of big business, big bankers, big mayors, and others big with authority whose equilibrium has been so devastatingly upset by the recent economic tailspin. We think we see that at the core of their failure was their faith in the idea that something may be had for nothing—that the world is a roulette wheel and, as Disraeli once ventured, "It will come around all right." But science has ever scorned this gambler's creed. The whole history of mechanics is a reiteration of proofs that perpetual motion is irrational, that it is a contradiction of nature forbidden by the second law of thermodynamics, a folly long ago labelled by our Patent Office "a physical impossibility."

But it refuses to stay outlawed. Professor P. W. Bridgman, of Harvard, remarks that he has been much impressed in recent conversations with physicists, particularly those of the younger generation, by "the frequency of the conviction that it may be possible some day to construct a machine which shall violate the second law of thermodynamics on a scale large enough to be commercially profitable."

So many "laws" have been scrapped that we are wondering whether the regularities of nature are laws at all. Perhaps they are only streaks of uniformity in an unseen diversity—like an unbroken sequence of heads in the tossing of a coin. If, as Emerson says, "the dice of God are loaded," can we be sure that we have discovered the position and extent of the load? If our data are correct for today, will they assuredly apply tomorrow? These questions suggest the dilemma in which the atomic explorer finds himself.

Nearly a hundred years ago Hegel wrote: "The stars are not pulled this way and that by mechanical forces. Theirs is a free motion. They go on their way, as the ancients said, like the blessed gods." This picturesque statement used to rouse Lord Kelvin to a white fury; but today Sir Arthur Eddington says, "I believe there is a sense in which it is true." Dirac, the Cambridge physicist, speaks of "the freewill of nature." Compton, the Chicago physicist, declares, "The electron may go its own way without any cause or reason so far as we can determine."

Such sayings by responsible scientists may be likened to the cries of Stock Exchange traders in those exciting October days of 1929 when, it is said, Broker Whitney took his stand and attempted to stem the tide by chanting, "205 for Steel." They are signs of the upheaval that has come in scientific thought regarding the ultimate building blocks of the universe. Betting on an electron has become a far more speculative game than betting on Steel; for in this crash in the laboratories, to quote Eddington again, "physics went off the gold standard."

The events leading up to this change had their beginnings in the pioneering theories of Max Planck, Albert Einstein, Niels Bohr, and other revolutionaries of Europe, but the experimental work that gave the final blow to the old foundations was achieved in an American laboratory by a young American researcher, Arthur H. Compton. During the World War, Compton was detailed to experimental work in the Westinghouse Research Laboratory. Here he was developing airplane instruments for the Army when an item in one of the scientific journals caught his attention. It was a report from a European laboratory of a certain curious behavior of X-rays.

The thing was so infinitesimal and indirect that its very existence was doubted, but it fascinated Compton. After the armistice he packed off to Cambridge University, England. Here, at the Cavendish Laboratory, he concentrated on a study of X-rays, particularly on a strange effect that he began to get in his experiments.

The effect was this: When X-rays are thrown against a crystal, they are reflected. This is consistent with their na-

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ture as waves. When you stand opposite a cliff and shout, the sound waves are reflected by the cliff. But a peculiarity about the X-ray echoes is that they came back with a longer wave-length. It was as though a soprano should shout, and the words should return in bass.

Compton explored this strange phenomenon a year in Cambridge. He returned to the United States and continued his quest in a laboratory at Washington University, Saint Louis, where he had accepted appointment to teach physics. It was here, at last, that he began to get definite measurements of the "bass" echoes that "soprano" X-rays give when reflected or scattered.

"Suppose we assume that the X-rays are particles," said Compton, "somewhat like the particles that make up the crystal, only smaller. They are tiny bullets, and when they hit the crystal it is not a smooth surface that they strike but the outer particles of the whirling atoms that make up the crystal. A ray hits one of these outer electrons. The event is comparable to that of a rifle bullet colliding with a cannon ball—some of the energy of the speeding bullet is absorbed by the massive ball, which recoils slightly from the blow, and the bullet bounces back with reduced energy. Thus, what seemed to be a change in the wave-length of the X-ray is in reality a reduction in the energy of its particle."

Orthodox science doubted this explanation—though Einstein had previously used a corpuscular theory of light to account for an effect of radiation on certain metals. There are familiar phenomena, such as the interference and diffraction of light, that can be explained only as wave effects. Particles can't behave that way.

But, retorted Compton, waves can't behave as the X-ray echoes do. Perhaps radiation has a dual nature. Obviously it is waves, but just as obviously it is particles. Might it not be both?

Preposterous! A sort of atomic Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde?

"Fortunately, I was isolated in a small laboratory, working alone," said Compton, recalling the experience. In a large organization, subject to daily challenge by colleagues, the theory might have been pooh-poohed into abandonment before it was proved.

Recognition came when the University of Chicago invited the young professor to join the staff of its Ryerson Physical Laboratory. Other investigators began to get results. In England, Professor C. T. R. Wilson devised an ingenious experiment which gave visual demonstration of Compton's discovery. In the Wilson apparatus the tracks of invisible rays and electrons made visible streaks through water-vapor; and it was noticed that when an X-ray hit an electron, the ray did not spread as a wave would, but rebounded, and the electron swerved to one side in its recoil from the blow of the lighter body. Just like a bullet colliding with a cannon ball!

Science adopted a new word, *photon,* meaning particle of radiation, and named the phenomenon of the changed wave-length the Compton Effect. The Swedish Academy of Sciences recognized the work of Compton and Wilson as the most important contributions of the times to physics, and awarded them the Nobel Prize.

This discovery is revolutionary. Heretofore, certain aspects of nature which we call matter had been observed as particles; other aspects which we call radiation had been observed as waves. Now it was necessary to recognize that radiation is also particles.

But if light is both waves and particles, might not the same duality apply to matter? Louis de Broglie, of Paris, asked that question. Assuming that the smallest particle of matter, the electron, might be a wave, he calculated what the wave-length should be. The assumption was preposterous, of course, but nonsense was now too often the rule in physics for the fundamentalists to protest very loud when de Broglie published his "almost bizarre" prediction. In New York Doctors Davisson and Germer put the prediction to the test at the Bell Telephone Laboratories. They tried a beam of electrons to see if it would behave as a beam of light. It did. Therefore: electrons are waves. The Nobel Prize went to de Broglie.

If electrons are waves, isn't it possible that protons, the massive positively charged nuclear particles of the atom, are also waves? Doctor A. J. Dempster asked that question at Ryerson Physical Laboratory by shooting a beam of protons against a crystal. It produced a beautiful diffraction pattern, the characteristic wave effect which particles are unable to give. Wherefore: protons are waves.

What of the atom itself? Doctor T. H. Johnson, of the Bartol Research Foundation, Philadelphia, experimented with the neutral hydrogen atom; it behaved just as its electron and proton had behaved separately. Professor O. Stern, of Hamburg, has since obtained similar results from the more complicated helium atom. Doubtless future explorers will go on down the periodic table, finding that all the varieties of matter—the carbon of flesh, the silicon of rocks, the iron of battleships, and all the rest—are waves, waves in space, moving shadow shapes, such stuff as dreams are made on.

And yet—they are also particles. Out of Compton's almost mystical preoccupation with X-ray echoes has come a new world in which all the waves are particles, and all the particles waves. This is the paradox that has upset the old order.

The old order—and it was not rated "old" until yesterday—was founded on the law of cause and effect. Laplace carried the idea to logical conclusion when he said that if an intelligence were informed of all the data of the physical world at a given moment, and were endowed with intellect able to analyze the data, it would be able to predict the future of the universe. Knowing all present events (causes), it would reason therefrom all future events (effects), and thus be able to include "in one and the same formula the movements of the largest bodies in the universe and those of the lightest atom."

Suppose we tackle the lightest "atom." If we could measure its position and velocity, we could predict its motion for the next second.

Werner Heisenberg, of Leipzig, tried to do just that. He imagined a microscope capable of utilizing the shortest radiation, and computed how it might be used to observe an electron. The precision of any observation is limited by the resolving power of the microscope. This, in turn, is controlled by two mathematical factors: the wave-length of the light used, and the angular aperture of the lens. The shorter the wave-length and the wider the angle, the sharper the image. This is true because

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of an optical principle which may be crudely illustrated by the following statement: Divide the measure of wave-length by the measure of aperture; if your quotient is 4, this means that the position at which the image appears is twice as indefinite as it would be if the result were 2. Naturally, therefore, the microscopist tries to use an illuminant of the smallest possible wave-length, and increases the angle of the lens to the widest workable aperture. Theoretically a wave may be as small as we please, and theoretically there should be no limit to the precision with which an object may be observed with waves.

But here is where the dual nature of light obtrudes its veto. Waves may be reduced to any theoretical minimum, but photons cannot. And it is with photons that we must observe, because light will not do work as waves. Radiation may travel as waves; but whenever it acts, it acts in its corpuscular capacity. We see with particles of light, not waves, and we cannot see with less than a whole particle.

For the electron to be observed, therefore, at least one photon must illuminate it. This means that the photon, travelling at its constant speed of 186,000 miles a second, must strike the electron and be reflected back to the observer's eye. But to strike the electron is to interfere with its motion. By the very act of observing we change its velocity to an indeterminate degree.

But we have a choice of photons. Some hit harder than others. It is a rule that the shorter the wave-length, the greater the energy of the radiation. Thus, red light is so lacking in energy that it will not activate an ordinary photographic plate, though the shorter blue light will fog it instantly. By using photons of longer wave-length we may lessen the impact on the electron, theoretically reduce its recoil to the vanishing point, and measure its velocity. But —if we do, the uncertainty of the electron's position will be increased, since the *longer* wave-length divided by the angular aperture of the lens gives a larger quotient, and thereby operates to limit the resolving power of the microscope. The resulting image would be fuzzy.

Doctor Heisenberg found that every time he increased the precision of one measurement, the precision of the other diminished proportionately. He might get the electron's position within a probable error of one 10,000th of an inch, and its velocity within a probable error of one mile a second. But if he refined his determination of position so that its probable error was reduced to one 100,000th of an inch, the probable error of his velocity determination increased to about ten miles a second. Theoretically, he might record position precisely, but then the measurement for velocity would disappear. Or he might "clock" the speed down to the last decimal point, but it would be at the cost of all knowledge of position.

In short, Heisenberg found that the uncertainty of position multiplied by the uncertainty of velocity always gives the *same* numerical value. The degree of indefiniteness is fixed. Though it may be shifted from one horn of the dilemma to the other, no refinement of instrument or method gives promise of reducing the total inaccuracy.

This, then, is science's new certainty. The uncanny regularity of the restriction, this certainty of uncertainty, gives Heisenberg's principle the appearance of law in our present view of the universe. It says that in the world of the atom we can never know more than half the facts. For the other half we must depend on the law of probability. Is nature, then, "a giant game of cards?"

The conclusion is upsetting. Whatever is not measured is not known in the scientific sense. What is not determinable cannot be said to be determinate. Effects cannot be predicted if causes cannot be ascertained. And if causes cannot be ascertained, who can say that they are causes? Perhaps the stars do go their way, like the blessed gods. Maybe the electron does choose its path. Possibly there is a freewill in nature, and the radium atom may be able to postpone its disintegration till fate, like death, raps on the door. We cannot know. We can only calculate the probabilities—and by the same methods that we calculate the probabilities of heads or tails.

We see the moon in the sky. It is not the moon as it is, but as it *was* 1.2 seconds ago. The astronomer tries to measure its position, but photons of sunlight beat upon earth and moon with a pressure of hundreds of tons continually, while the weakening hold of the dying sun and the perpetual rain of meteors further displace both bodies from their orbits.

We define the second as the 86,400th part of the mean solar day, a value we determine by observation of the motion of stars across the meridian. The rotation of the earth thus is our master clock. But the friction of tides against ocean shores and bottoms is continually slowing down the terrestrial whirl, thereby lengthening the day. Recent observations by Doctor E. W. Brown, of Yale, tend to show that there are sudden fluctuations also. A study made in 1932 by Doctor H. T. Stetson, of Perkins Observatory, in collaboration with Mr. A. L. Loomis, of Tuxedo Park, N. Y., revealed an apparant shift of as much as 63 feet in the difference in longitude between Washington and London during the lunar day—a difference representing an appreciable fraction of a second. So our master clock is indefinite.

Uncertainty reigns, and whether the universe is a world of fortuitous atoms or a world of freewill, it cannot be described in its fundamental physical aspects today as a world of causality.

To be sure, the statistical rule of averages will give workable results when billions of particles are involved, as is the case in telephone circuits, radio tubes, gasoline motors, suspension bridges, boiling teakettles, red-hot stoves, and all the other tools of our using. The physicist has found that he can strike an average and estimate fairly closely the behavior of crowds of atoms, just as the insurance actuary does in computing the death rate of crowds of human beings. A worldwide suicide wave might bankrupt the insurance companies. Similarly, it is not impossible (though highly improbable) that heat might on some exceptional occasion take a notion to flow from the kettle to the fire. But probability is a shaky substitute for causality. If it suffices in our coarse macrocosm, that fact does not soften the blow that has shattered the spacious Newtonian law of cause and effect.

"To the solid ground
Of Nature trusts the mind that builds for aye."

But, in this shadowy world of particles that are waves and of events that betray no causes, where is the solid ground of nature?

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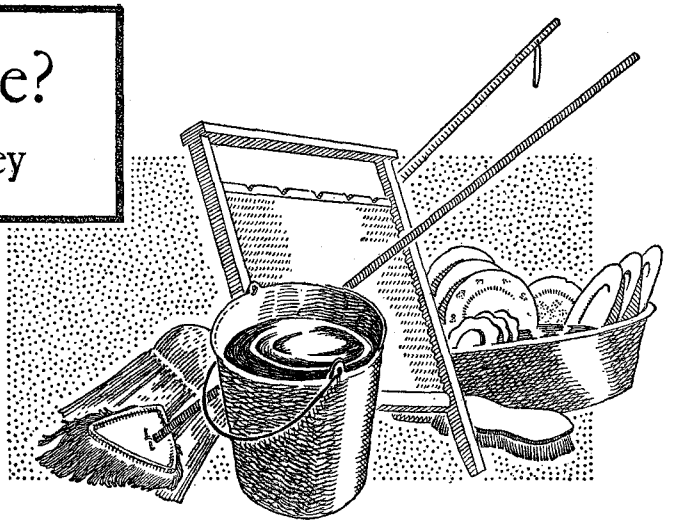
Are Servants People?

By Dorothy Dunbar Bromley



Housewives exploit domestic labor. Sweatshop hours and wages for servants are often found in the best of families. Mrs. Bromley indicts American women for using the depression to their own advantage.

SOME few weeks ago I was the unwilling guest at a suburban bridge club, and the talk which I heard about servants gave me the uncomfortable feeling that Kipling was right about the female of the species. A Mrs. Phipps was highly indignant because her maid, who was now doing both her own and the nursemaid's job, complained of being tired out all the time. A Mrs. Simms gave it as her opinion that "the more you do for servants the worse they treat you—and these days they ought to be thankful to have a roof over their heads." She had, she said, told her maid that they could not afford to keep her, but that she could stay on at $15 a month if she liked. At this point the hostess—who did not appear to be suffering in any material way from the depression—triumphantly explained that she had fired her $60-a-month maid and gotten another "who gave her perfect service for $25 a month." The general idea among the ladies seemed to be that they should all club together to keep wages down now that they had servants "where they wanted them." When they heard that a neighbor of Mrs. Phipps was giving her servant every other week-end off and two free nights a week to make up for the cut in her pay, there was a chorus of indignation. It was obvious, the hostess went on, that servants were getting good wages today, or the President would have included them in his blanket code. Certainly he could count on the women of the country to do the right thing both as employers and consumers. She, for one, was not buying anything at a store that did not display the Blue Eagle.

On the way home the friend who had taken me to the card party confessed that she thought she was a fool to be paying her maid as much as $60 a month. If she cut her, say, to $35, she could get that antique table she had been looking at, and perhaps she and her husband could take a trip to Florida later on. When I suggested, as politely as possible, that we must put more money into the pockets of the working class, not take any out, if we were ever going to recover from the depression, she could not follow my logic. Her maid worked all day long and she had no place to spend her money, etc., etc.

II

The bridge-club ladies must have been a little taken aback the other day when Mrs. Roosevelt made a public appeal to American women to apply the principles of the NRA to domestic servants. "One has no more right to expect sweatshop hours and wages in one's home than in a factory," she said.

Whether or not they have the moral right, many housewives are able to set their own low price on domestic labor today, because the market is flooded with servants out of work as well as with women and girls from other trades who have turned to domestic labor as the one means of escape from starvation.

The Mrs. Phippses and the Mrs. Simmses, who are paying sweatshop wages, innocently argue that their servants are much better off than department store clerks or factory workers who have to provide their own board and room. But they ignore the fact that servants work infinitely longer hours than either mercantile or industrial employees. They forget, too, that there are a few other necessities in life besides food and shelter. It seems never to occur to them that a servant needs street clothes, that over a period of time she is bound to have dentist's and doctor's bills to pay, that she ought to be investing in insurance or saving in some way for her old age, and that she, too, needs a little recreation. If she has a family to help—as most people have these days—they think that is her misfortune. A servant, in fine, is supposed to be an automaton who lives and breathes and has her being in an atmosphere of work.

I will admit that the question of what is a fair wage for domestic workers is a very large one. The wages of $85 and $100 a month that highly trained servants were getting, sometimes in addition to their living, before the depression, may or may not have been excessive, depending upon their ability to carry responsibility. To my way of thinking, a servant who has the judgment and skill that are necessary for running a house smoothly, and who is unfailingly loyal to her employer's interests, is worth more than money can pay. A servant of this order helps us create that precious thing, a home, while she leaves us free to go about and amuse ourselves or to do work outside the home which appeals to our tastes and capabilities. Be that as it may, let us see how the wages which servants are earning today compare with the wages which the President has asked employers to pay other classes of workers. The expense of sheltering and feeding a domestic worker if he or she "lives in" can fairly be reckoned, I should think, at $30 a month. If we add this to a $35 monthly wage—which as I shall pres-

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ently show is a high average of what is actually being paid—we get a total of $65 a month. This is not a great deal more than the minimum wage of $12 a week or approximately $52 a month which was specified in the blanket code for industrial workers, and about the same as the minimum wage of $15 a week which was laid down for department store and clerical workers. Yet full-time servants work, not forty hours a week, but anywhere from seventy-two to ninety, according to the demands made upon them.

Domestic wages in many instances have almost reached the vanishing point. When a Brooklyn newspaper some months ago ran a feature story suggesting that there were at least 1000 unemployed girls in the community who would be glad to work for their room and board, or for as little as $5 a month, the paper was flooded with letters of enquiry from housewives who wanted "to do their share in the crisis." Each and every one of them had a "good home" to offer a girl, but it was plain that they expected the object of their charity to take over the greater part, if not all of the housework. Most of them specified that they did not want a "greenhorn," others said that the person must not be over thirty because then she might be "played out," while quite a few said that they would pay the girl in stockings and old clothes. Letters also came from servants who had been discharged to make room for girls who would work for nothing, and the tone of these letters was quite different. Numbers of the writers had aged parents or children to support, and all of them were embittered by the unfair treatment they had received.

Data which the National Child Labor Committee has collected leave no doubt that young girls in their teens all over the country are working in what is euphemistically called "opportunity homes" under conditions that are little better than peonage. Wages of $1 to $3 a week for cooking and heavy housework for large families, with washing and ironing, furnace tending, window cleaning, chauffeuring and what-not thrown in as additional jobs, are not unusual. The "home" that is given the girl may amount to nothing more than a cot over the garage—in a damp basement—or in the attic. In homes where there are children the so-called "mother's helper" must stay with them at night and get up early in the morning to take care of them. As a rule the young worker is given no free time at all. From the Minneapolis Y. W. C. A. comes the story of a girl who was so exhausted after leaving a position that she slept for two days and nights and had to be awakened to eat her meals.

Giving a girl shelter in exchange for her board and room has become such a racket that many of the social agencies, after bitter experience, are now declining to send girls out on this basis. Housewives whose requests are refused declare scornfully that "there can't be so much unemployment after all."

The defenseless "mother's helpers" are far worse off than the sweatshop workers for they are the slaves of their employers twenty-four hours a day. "It would be better to be dead," one girl declared after she had lived in an "opportunity home" for six months. It is not difficult to understand that some girls prefer to earn their livelihood in the historic fashion, unpleasant and dangerous as that calling must be, rather than sell themselves into domestic slavery.

III

The most shocking instances of exploitation are to be found among the objectionable elements of our population who have never before had servants. Yet one finds the will to exploit in every level of society—the most saintly as well as the most avaricious. When a representative of the Consumer's League was lecturing on labor standards a few months ago before church groups in different parts of the country, women in the audience frequently asked if it was not all right to give a girl "a good home" in exchange for her services as a housework. The lecturer each time pointed out that it was hardly fair to exact full-time service in exchange for a living, no matter how desperate the girl's situation, but she did not have the feeling that she had convinced her listeners.

A New York minister, who was one of the first to urge loyalty to the President's recovery program, phoned a placement bureau the other day. He has a large house on Fifth Avenue and he was looking for a high type of servant to answer the doorbell and do all the housework, cooking, and laundry for his family of four grownups. For service of this kind this man of God expected to pay only $30 a month.

One might hope to find enlightened social attitudes in university circles, if anywhere. Yet a professor's wife in a Middle-Western university asks a welfare agency to send her a general housework to take care of a ten-room house, do the laundry, all the cleaning, and help with the cooking for four adults and two children—all for $3 a week. I should think she would have blushed to make such a request, but in all probability her friends were doing the same thing. At a large Eastern university, one of the few where faculty salaries have not yet been reduced, a professor's wife recently asked the employment bureau if she was not justified in following the current trend and cutting her maid's salary a second time. This family lives quite formally and entertains frequently; and the children are a constant care to the maid who never has an evening free. The mistress of the house is a college graduate, she and her husband move in the radical circle at the university, and she flatters herself that she has advanced ideas. Yet it seems perfectly fair to her that she should pay her maid, not what she is worth, but as little as she is willing to work for.

It is sad commentary that a woman's education and breeding have very little to do with her fairness as an employer. If you were to meet Mrs. Drake, a charming intelligent woman, devoted to the interests of her husband and children, and active in civic work, you would say that she represents the best type of American womanhood. Yet she pays her very competent full-time maid who "lives out" only $35 a month. If you were to ask her how her maid manages to meet her room rent, buy her clothes, and have any recreation, she would airily say that "she never asks her maid what she does with her money, as she considers that her own business." With all of her interest in welfare legislation she has not yet come to see that servants have the same rights as other workers.

Then there are the countless idle women who fritter away their time and neglect their children while their maids toil from early morning until late at night. A household worker who belongs to the Y. W. C. A. Industrial Club in

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Chicago reports with unconscious humor that her mistress, a college graduate, "spends as much time sleeping as possible and the rest of it shopping." "She rushes down town," the girl says, "and buys lavishly, usually exchanging what she has bought the next day." Another girl describes her employer as spending her days at luncheons, teas, and matinees, or "rehearsing the love stories which she has been reading." If some of these women could see themselves as their servants see them!

IV

Perhaps most to be criticised are the people who live on an elaborate scale and still pay their servants low wages. One of America's best-loved concert singers whose income from her radio, Victrola, and concert contracts must still amount to many thousands a year, pays her chauffeur $20 a month, her housemaid $25, and her cook $35. Yet she keeps up a town and a country house and entertains lavishly. Another New York family on approximately the same income level goes to Florida for the winter and expects their three servants —whom they have had for several years and whose wages they have already cut in half—to pay their own railroad fare. Any number of well-to-do people have got couples to look after their country homes for "no more than we would have to pay one servant," they will tell you shrewdly.

In other cities the wages which are being paid by our better families are still lower. In a large Southern city a family of the aristocracy that entertains a great deal and lives in a fourteen-room house, is getting along with a combination cook and housemaid whom they pay $10 a month. The lady of the house boasts, as did the hostess at the bridge party, that "she has never had such wonderful service."

I should think that the manner of life of the rich and the pseudo-rich would make bolsheviks out of underpaid servants. A New York broker and his wife are in the habit of inviting parties of guests out to their Long Island place for protracted week-ends, and employing a temporary cook and butler from Friday morning until Monday evening at $5 a piece. They do not stint on either the food or the drinks and they keep the two servants up until all hours. The last butler they engaged refused to go back and remarked drily to the placement bureau that "there are no more ladies and gentlemen."

There are, of course, "ladies and gentlemen" left in the country. But they are not the people who have turned off their old servants and hired new ones at a bargain. I think of another Long Island resident, the cousin of a friend of mine, who employs a cook and a kitchen maid, three housemaids, a chauffeur, a governess, and two gardeners. She has flatly told her husband that she would not cut their wages one cent—"not so long as they see Scotch whiskey coming into the house regularly." Their chauffeur has two sons in high school who are brighter than her own—she candidly admits—and she is determined that he keep them in school. So she has economized in other ways: by buying her dresses in the budget shops of the department stores instead of on upper Fifth Avenue, and by getting along without a new car.

For many people who are still secure the depression has meant, not self-denial in any form, but an opportunity to profit from the plight of some unfortunate person. The Emergency Work Bureau in New York City has been flooded with calls from people who are eager to avail themselves of the services of a "refined woman." A Park Avenue resident wanted a college graduate who would look after her mother in their country place for $40 a month. "She must consider herself a servant and yet be able to talk to my mother about the things that interest her," was the way she put it. Another woman, who has a fine town house and two cars, wanted a graduate nurse to stay with her invalid aunt in the country and do the housekeeping and laundry in a 9-room house. She would pay her, perhaps, $5 or $10 a month "for her incidentals," and she was sure that she would have "a lovely time looking at the flowers." Like the Park Avenue woman, she was trying to shift a family responsibility to the shoulders of a capable gentlewoman who would leave her free, for a small consideration, to enjoy a life of pleasure.

Time and again it is the same old story. The fortunate trampling on the unfortunate. The exploiters say to themselves, "It is *my* life, *my* pleasure, *my* comfort that matters. Why should this other person who is down and out expect to have a life of her own?" If any one argues the point with them they will say frankly that they believe in the law of the survival of the fittest. As though only the fit had survived the depression!

Since regulation of household labor can hardly be attempted by law, the Mrs. Phippses and the Mrs. Simmses, and all the others who have driven servants' wages down to sweatshop levels, should by all that is decent and right coordinate domestic wages with the scales laid down by the NRA for other lines of work—as Mrs. Roosevelt has urged. If they cannot afford to raise wages appreciably they should shorten their servants' work-day and not require more hours of labor than they can pay for. Women who fail to make such an adjustment and who still give lip service to the NRA are little better than hypocrites.

It shakes one's faith more than a little in one's sex to see women, who should have the sensitiveness that is supposed to come with gentle breeding, walk roughshod over their household employees. Before women got the vote it was predicted that they would bring about many needed social reforms. Leaders of women have achieved more than a little in this direction by intelligent lobbying and propaganda work, but the mass of women voters can take very little credit. There is nothing to show, so far as I can see, that women as a sex have any stronger social sense than men, if as strong. Essentially we are individualists and we hang on to every prerogative we can call our own, whether it is the exclusive right to some man's affection, or the right to make another creature do our bidding from morning until night. Fundamentally our attitude toward servants is much the same as that of the older European races who have always treated them as serfs. We can hardly boast of the idealism of American women so long as there are servants in the country who say, as an intelligent Chicago girl said after ten years of service with different families, "The treatment is terrible and you feel that housework is about the lowest work there is to do. We are cooks, dish-washers, wash-women, ironers, scrubwomen, waitresses, housekeepers, and nursemaids, but are we people?"

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AS I LIKE IT

William Lyon Phelps

Superman Talbot . . . Intelligible Gertrude Stein . . . Whittier and High-Brow Ladies . . . Morals and Good Writing . . . Unpublished Documents of Scott and Burns. . . .

One of the greatest books of travel and exploration that I have ever read, and one that bids fair to become a classic, is *The Book of Talbot,* compiled and composed by his widow Violet, Mrs. Talbot Clifton. Her pages are written in a spirit of mystical exaltation; but the hero is a "hard-boiled" Englishman in remote and terrifying places. The appearance of this book is not only a literary event, it is a stunning shock of surprise. The world did not know that this amazing person had lived or died; and now he takes on almost mythical proportions. He was a Superman.

This book cannot be classified or described in terms of any other book or kind of book; it is unique. Talbot Clifton, born in 1868 in England, was conventional enough in his formal education, going through Eton and Cambridge. But even in youth he could not rest from travel. The founder of his family lived in 1060; he inherited immense wealth and a vast estate; but he could not stay home. Before he was twenty he had been twice around the world.

He died in Africa in 1928, on a journey which ordinary common sense would have forbidden him to undertake, especially when accompanied by his wife. But common sense, prudence, security, meant nothing to this glorious adventurer; he was a frontiersman by nature, and he felt the imperious and importunate call of the unexplored.

Just as no other mathematician can live with Einstein, because he penetrates into the most remote and glacial regions of pure thought, where no other man can stay with him and live, so Talbot Clifton, in all the years up to his marriage, would not take another civilized man with him, whenever he left England for the unmapped regions of ice and of fire. This was not because he wanted selfishly to enjoy whatever fame might come from discovery; it was because he knew other men could not endure what he enjoyed, and he was the kind of man who simply had to "go it alone," to be free and not to be retarded.

Fortunately the book gives maps so that we can see exactly where he went in the regions beyond Hudson Bay, in equatorial Africa, in the Arctic ocean shores of Siberia—to me the most thrilling part of the book.

Even more fortunately this man kept a diary of these wild journeys, from which his wife prints extracts; but her own chapters are written in a very remarkable style, illumined by the sunset glow after his final departure.

As a young man, Clifton went to Australia, to California, and learned to lasso horses in Wyoming with the cowboys. They must have loved him. He played polo in California, went into wild places in Mexico where he nearly died, painted pictures, wrote poems, and always carried Shakespeare there and everywhere, Alaska, Siberia,—he could not be separated from Shakespeare.

He was a hunter all his life and came near death in going after the musk-ox in northern British Columbia. In these strange places he lived only with natives, and learned to speak their languages—the Eskimos, the Siberians, the Africans, everywhere. Many of them regarded him as a god.

He met the woman he married in South America, and their courtship was as exciting as his other adventures.

The autobiography of Gertrude Stein, called *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas,* is certainly one of the most diverting books of 1933. I had never seen a book or article by Gertrude Stein, and all I knew of her was gained from reading snippets. I remember an extremely satirical and humorous review of her writings by the late Stuart Sherman, who thought his parody of her had more sense than the original. She has finally adopted the only means of obtaining readers for her creations—she has written so fascinating an account of her life that there will follow from this a heady run on all her books, some of the earlier ones probably going up to fancy prices.

For my part, I hope she gets what she wants. Anybody who can write as good a book as this autobiography deserves to succeed in other literary undertakings, although I do not believe her peculiar style will make any important converts.

There is nothing odd about the style of this book except its deliberate naïveté, which really adds to its charm. No writer could be more intellectually mature in her ideas or observations or irony or humor; but the style, deliberately chosen, reminds me often of *The Young Visiters.*

The humor enlivening the whole book is irresistible. The conversations which occur on nearly every page are brilliant. The people are alive.

I think Gertrude Stein has the laugh on all of us. There is an intellectual power animating this work, and a courageous sincerity absolutely regardless of consequences.

Of the new books on Shakespeare that appear every week, one of the best is by the accomplished Logan Pearsall

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Smith, whose praise is so much more dangerous than his anything else. The only page I should like to have cancelled is page 9. This would have been appropriate in 1883; but what person who reads many of our modern highly praised authors that are specialists in sex can really be shocked either by Shakespeare's outspoken grossness or by the skilful double meaning of sonnet passages? Unlike many modern authors, Shakespeare's fame does not depend on these relaxations.

"He can't mean that!" the shocked reader exclaims; but oh, my dear reader, he does mean it, and his meaning, if you are a nice-minded person, will make you blush all over.

I'll wager it won't—not in 1933.

This book *On Reading Shakespeare* purposely gets off on the wrong foot; but beginning with Chapter Second, Mr. Smith is magnificent. This is, what every book of literary criticism should be, exciting; and it ought to be, for what higher excitement is there than reading Shakespeare? Barrett Wendell described as well as any one the miraculous beauty of Shakespeare's language, when he said that with Shakespeare words and thoughts were identical.

Mr. Smith alludes to Tolstoi's freak book on Shakespeare, in which the Russian writer maintained that Shakespeare was only a third-class writer, and that the originals from which he took his plays were better literature than his finished product. This is one of the very few contributions that Tolstoi made to international humor. There were two reasons for Tolstoi's hostility. First, he judged Shakespeare's dialogue by the standards of realistic novels, with the result that he proved that Shakespeare's language is not like common speech. A young man who met his dead father walking in the night would not spout blank verse. He really wouldn't.

Shakespeare did not know how to write. The second reason is that Tolstoi, a genius, was totally lacking in the divine gift of appreciation. He could not bear to hear any other writer praised.

He was angry because other persons would not take his attacks on Shakespeare seriously. He complained, after he had demolished Shakespeare in the presence of Turgenev, that Turgenev would not argue with him; "he merely walked away." Hurrah for Turgenev!

Turning from English to American literature, fairly represented respectively by Shakespeare and Whittier, Albert Mordell deserves general applause for his biography of the latter, called *Quaker Militant, John Greenleaf Whittier.* The Quaker emerges from this volume deservedly as a major American poet; but the chief contribution to our knowledge of him in these pages is the detailed account of Whittier's services to the anti-slavery cause during thirty years. Whittier as a radical appeals strongly to Mr. Mordell, and he properly emphasizes this part of his work; for Whittier gave up political ambition and many other things to fight for an unpopular and dangerous cause.

Yet after the lapse of many years the political opinions of a poet are of no more consequence than his moral character—they are no more important in a poet than they are in an opera singer. Just as the only question with a would-be prima donna is *Can she sing?* so the only question with a poet is *Can he write?*

Now however admirable Whittier's services to anti-slavery undertakings may have been, what keeps him alive as a poet is *Snow Bound,* religious verse, some popular ballads, and a few love poems.

I had rather read a pro-slavery man who wrote good poetry than an anti-slavery man who wrote poor poetry; that is, if it is poetry and not economics I am after. Just as when I want music, I had rather hear a woman of bad character sing magnificently than hear a noble, self-sacrificing evangelist sing off the pitch.

When Mr. Mordell discusses Whittier's relations with women, I think modern psychiatry, "repressions," "defense mechanisms," etc., are rather too much for him. That Whittier was chaste and that he really believed in God our biographer admits; but he is unduly severe on Whittier in his flirtations with women. There is no doubt that several times Whittier was deeply in love; but the numerous gentle philanderings ought to be easy enough to understand. Whittier was a poet of nation-wide fame. It is not surprising that women flattered him, wrote to him, went to see him, valued every word they got out of him. I can see no blame in his conduct.

Like many old bachelors, Whittier was fussy about the appearance of women. Mr. Pickard told me that when these adoring ladies called on him, if their foreheads were largely exposed—he could not endure a high forehead on a woman—he would pull their hair down nearly to their eyebrows. I examined his photograph-album, full of the pictures of his female friends. Whittier had taken pen and ink and drawn down their hair when the forehead was too high to meet his requirements. How Whittier ever dressed himself in the morning without cursing is a mystery—and yet I don't think he cursed. He had had such trouble with elusive buttons that his stiff shirts and collars were made without button or button hole. Then he himself pinned these appalling planks together every morning.

If one looks at the fine frontispiece portrait in Mr. Mordell's book, one will observe that although young Whittier was handsome, he had a very queer skull—a vertical skull. I tried on his hat which must have been a number six and it rested on the top of my head, in the manner of a vaudeville artist.

Mr. Mordell has written an important and valuable work, in which he has dug up a large amount of new material. He has the satisfaction of knowing that every future writer on Whittier will be obliged to consult this book, both for the information about Whittier and about the political history of the United States.

A new and excellent anthology is *English Romantic Poets,* edited by the redoubtable James Stephens, assisted by Edwin L. Beck and Royall H. Snow, who I suspect did most of the work. The introductory essay of over twenty pages is signed by the famous Irishman. There are more than 800 pages in the book and the work is intensive, beginning with Wordsworth and closing with Southey, White, and Wolfe.

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A highly interesting volume is *Reminiscences of William Graham Sumner,* by his most distinguished pupil, Professor A. G. Keller. As an undergraduate I took every course Sumner offered and in later years I had the honor of beir

one of his colleagues. He was a tremendous personality and I think that his fame as a writer will grow brighter as the years pass. He was an unusual combination of an inspiring popular classroom teacher and lecturer, and one of the leading research scholars in academic history. This book will be read with delight by every one who knew Sumner, by the thousands of Yale men whom he taught. But it ought to be read by others; for he lives again in these pages.

I am glad to see a one-volume memorial edition of *The Forsyte Saga,* with a charming introductory note by Mrs. Galsworthy.

An attractive volume that every one who has a private library will want to own, is the complete *Divine Comedy* of Dante, with the Italian on the left pages and the English on the right. It was a good piece of work to include all this in one book; not cumbersome, though chunky. The price is certainly low. The Italian text is edited by H. Oelsner, and the English versions are by Carlyle, Okey, and Wicksteed.

One of the new books that will be most eagerly welcomed by intelligent readers is *Turns of Thought, a Group of Modern Philosophers,* consisting of five essays by George Santayana. The author's mastery of English prose makes everything he writes a pure delight; and he always has something to say. His wit and humor ripen with advancing years. Here is what he says of F. H. Bradley:

> In this early book we see him coming forth like a young David against every clumsy champion of utilitarianism, hedonism, positivism, or empiricism. And how smooth and polished were the little stones in his sling! How fatally they would have lodged in the forehead of that composite monster, if only it had had a forehead!

As it will soon be time for housewives and other women to be reading seed catalogues and thinking of the gardens of 1934, let me recommend a fat volume which they will consult as often as I consult a dictionary or an encyclopædia, and with as much profit. This is *The New Illustrated Gardening Encyclopædia,* and is edited by Richard Sudell (*connais pas*). It is a British book of 1152 pages, printed in readable type, with an enormous number of pictures. Every page contains something I did not know.

An entertaining anthology in a new style, edited by the accomplished William Rose Benét, is *Fifty Poets,* with the secondary title, "An American Auto-Anthology." Mr. Benét wrote to those that he thought were the fifty best American poets and asked them to choose their best poem with accompanying comments. The result is instructive, though no comment is better than the editor's own introduction.

Bliss Perry, who performed a great service in editing *The Heart of Emerson's Journals,* has put us further in his debt by *The Heart of Emerson's Essays.* In some 350 pages we have the Golden Remains. I am very glad he included the essay on Napoleon; by the intuition of genius, Emerson gave an estimate of the Corsican that the researches into archives during the last eighty years and the talent of authorities on military tactics have only ratified.

A new short-story writer, and this time from the Philippines, is José Garcia Villa. His *Footnote to Youth,* written in English with a prefatory note by Edward J. O'Brien, contains some tales of his native land that have a poignant beauty. I hope the remarkable promise displayed in this book will be fulfilled.

Meridian is a book of poems (1923–1932) by Bernice Kenyon. Her talent is developing rapidly, for this volume shows a distinct advance over some of her earlier work. I like particularly the poem "Old Age," with its philosophy in the third and fourth lines of the first stanza, which suit me better than the first two.

Among the autumn harvest of thrillers I particularly recommend the following: *Murder at Mocking House,* by Walter C. Brown, author of the delectable *Laughing Death; The Doctor's First Murder,* by Robert Hare, something quite new and original; *Cries in the Night,* by J. H. Wallis, much the best he has written; *The Tall House Mystery,* by A. Fielding, which has a lovable detective. Every one of these books carries my personal guarantee, which means that if you don't like it, you can lump it. Curious, the use of *lump.* Wyld takes it from the meaning "pile together," we lump a number of things in one heap; hence, when you lump it, you must put up with it, combine yourself with it—I wonder?

To those who are puzzled when one of their friends "goes over to Rome," I recommend a little book called *The Church Surprising,* by Penrose Fry, the husband of the famous novelist Sheila Kaye-Smith. Mr. Fry was a clergyman in the Church of England, belonging to the Anglo-Catholic party. Once I heard him preach in his London church. Since that time both he and his wife have become Roman Catholics, or as she expressed it, they have dropped the hyphen. This book will be most interesting to those who are Anglo-Catholics. It is of course based on certain principles which only Catholics could accept. It is simply and honestly written, with candor and charity.

The noble army of readers who enjoy Pepys (pronounced Peeps) will welcome *Letters and The Second Diary of Samuel Pepys,* edited by R. G. Howarth, with many contemporary portraits and views. This is a volume of 456 pages, and surely all I have to do is to mention it. Of course I have got to own it, and so have you.

When the distinguished Canadian poet Wilson MacDonald made out a list (at my request) of Canadian poets he certainly "started something." A number of my correspondents in various parts of Canada have recommended the works of A. M. Stephen. His first volume appeared in 1913. I have been

reading him, and I recommend his volume *The Land of Singing Waters* and (but not so highly) *Brown Earth and Bunch Grass.* An admirable book, edited by Mr. Stephen, is *The Golden Treasury of Canadian Verse.* This is a little volume that every one should own; for I am convinced that we are shamefully ignorant of the poetry written by

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our neighbors of the north. The surest road to oblivion in Great Britain and in the United States is to be a Canadian poet.

One of the best reasons for printing *lists* of writers is that any list will instantly strike sparks. I have no space to print the letters that I have received concerning Mr. MacDonald's arrangement of Canadian poets. Some of these letters have been violently abusive and others enthusiastic in their praise. It is fine to see intelligent persons get into such a state of excitement over poetry.

It is to Mrs. S. J. Nasmith of West Vancouver I owe my acquaintance with the work of Mr. Stephen and also the possession of three volumes by him. I should like to accept the cordial invitation she gave me, and I will when it is possible.

Mathematics were never my long suit; even as a child at school, the teacher told me that in mathematics I was slow but not sure. Recently, speaking of the scarcity of genius, I hazarded the conjecture that at the birth of every baby, the chances of its being remembered one hundred years after its death were about eighteen trillion billion to one. It seems I was unnecessarily pessimistic; but I am glad I made the blunder, for it drew the following excellent epistle from a real mathematician, Holloway Kilborn of New Haven, Conn.

Now Billy, every one who knows you is well aware of the fact that you're not a mathematician, that you detest the subject and consider it one of the necessary evils; but, I for one, did not know that your imagination was as wild as the above statement would seem to indicate. Eighteen trillion billion would make quite a pile if it were grains of sand, but when it's babies it seems worse someway, probably because there would be so much noise.

The population of the Earth is, roughly, two-billion (2,000,000,000) and the general birth rate is not far from 40 per 1000 per year and that means eighty million (80,000,000) births a year.

Your imagination of 18 trillion billion is written this way: 18,000,000,000,000,000,000,000, and if we divide this amount by the number of babies born in one year, the answer will be the number of years that would be required to produce a single one of your one-hundred-years-remembered individuals. The answer is 225,000,000,000,000 or 225 trillion years.

If I remember correctly, the geologists tell us that the age of the earth is 2 billion years, so that to date we would have produced one one-hundred-thousandth part of one of your remembered individuals.

Now there must have been, since the start of the Earth some 10,000 individuals who were remembered for one worth while thing or another for 100 years, so that makes your I.Q. (imagination quotient) just one billionth of being perfect.

The Faery Queene Club is enriched by the addition of the name of Arthur J. Carr, an undergraduate at the University of Michigan. I wish I were able to print the whole of his long letter, one of the best I have received from members of the F. Q. Club. Here is an extract:

It is no longer than many a dull novel, yet how many complete, exciting long novels could be written from the adventurous stuff of the poem—to say nothing of the scads of essays and novels conceivable from the numerous pregnant observations made by the way. "Vaine is the art that seeks it selfe for to deceive" may not be large enough a base for a whole critical creed, but if not a great root, it is at least a sturdy branch, able to bear good fruit.

There is none so gracious as Spenser. If Keats captured his elegance, Wordsworth his straightforward simplicity of statement, Shelley some of his eloquence, Milton some of his richness and majesty of language, no one has ever equalled Spenser himself for pure, liquid grace of style as well as of idea. Keats, Wordsworth, Shelley, Milton have not rivalled Spenser on his own spacious ground. This does not indicate, of course, that Spenser is the greatest poet. The reflected light is only steadier. . . .

This is sanity and health. If genius must be a little mad, this is no work of genius; it is something better. Spenser must have been a well-balanced man. . . . His is the highest plane of normality. . . . His is the sustained excitement of an active and healthy mind.

From Robert W. Archbald, Jr., of Philadelphia:

You referred to A. E. Housman's description of the physical effect of poetry. Emily Dickinson's *definition* of poetry was something like this: "If it makes your spine tingle and your hair stand on end, it's poetry."

The death of Ring W. Lardner on September 26 is a severe loss to American literature.

Through the kindness of my friend Mrs. David MacTaggart of Port Huron, Mich., I am enabled to give my readers two documents which I think have never been published. The first is an interesting letter by Walter Scott, which shows how he continued to maintain his anonymity in respect to the Waverley novels. The second is concerned with an illegitimate child of Robert Burns, whom he mentioned in a poem. These papers were transcribed from the original manuscripts by their owner in Scotland, on August 24, 1906, and given to Mrs. MacTaggart.

Scott's letter was written to the grandfather of the owner, who had urged Scott to put his folklore into print, and he as often protested his inability to do so.

Dear Sir: I have been very much to blame, not to write you sooner; my sincere thanks for your very curious and obliging communications, from which I have derived both instruction and amusement. I was in the country until

the beginning of winter, which has occasioned my being late in receiving your communications, which were, however, lying safely for me in Castle Street; you have been unusually successful in some most interesting enquiries. You will be surprised to find "Old Mortality" has got into print. The novel in which he appears belongs to the same cycle, and appears to be written by the same author as those of "Waverley" and "Guy Mannering" and displays the same knowledge of Scottish manners, and scenery, and the same carelessness as to arrangement of the story, which characterize these curious narratives. Why the author should conceal himself, and, in this case, even change his publishers as if to ensure his remaining concealed is a curious problem. I get the credit of them, and wish I deserved it, but I daresay the real author will one day appear. As a slight return for your attention, and presuming that the tales will interest you, I send a copy for your acceptance by the Post Patrick mail, the Ballantines having sent me a couple of copies as they usually do, of anything that they print which they think has merit. The first one, in my opinion, is rather below par, but the second is exceedingly good indeed. I shall be glad if they afford you some amusement.

The Picts' Kiln seems to be a very curious relique of antiquity. Is it not probable it may have been employed for burning lime? We know that these ancient people were traditionally renowned for their skill in architecture; they certainly seem to have been further advanced in the arts of life than their rival neighbours, the Scots, which may have arisen from their inhabiting the lower and more fertile part of the country. The *murder-hole* is also a curious tradition. It confirms me of opinion that our lawyers misinterpret the right meaning of the old grants of Baronial jurisdiction, which usually has the right of [?] and *gallows*. Our legal antiquaries hold that the [?] means the dungeon of the earth, and that the grant applies to a right of imprisonment and execution, but I am pretty much convinced that the grant refers to execution by hanging or drowning. There seems no good reason for granting a right of mere imprisonment, which we feel was common to almost all the King's vassals, whether possessing the higher powers of capital punishment or not.

I am prevented from writing further by the necessity of serving post.

Your obliged servant

WALTER SCOTT.

Abbotsford, December, 1816.

I, Elizabeth Paton, in ————, whereas, upon the twenty-second day of May, 1785 years, I brought forth a female child to Robert Burns, in Mossgiel, which he acknowledged satisfied the Church, got the child christened by the name of Elizabeth, and since that period,

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hath given me a pretty liberal allowance for lyin-in charges, maintenance and clothing to this date and now by agreement between Him and I, hath made payment to me of a certain sum of money, which I have accepted and hereby accept in full and compleat payment and satisfaction for all board, wages, cloathing and education, which I can claim for the said Elizabeth Paton, our child, and untill she arrives at the age of ten years compleat, the said Robert Burns being to free me of any expense attending her hereafter. Therefore I not only exonerate and discharge the said Robert Burns of all claims I have against him for maintenance, cloathing and education of the said child, till it arrives at the fixed age of ten years compleat, but also promise and engage to be carefull of and attend to the health and education of said Child till that Period. In Witness whereof, these Presents, wrote upon a four [piece ?] stamp by Garvis Hamilton, writer in Mauchline, and subscribed by me by initials, being my ordinary way of signing myself at Mauchline, the first day of December, 17 hundred and eighty six years before these witnesses, James Smith, Merchant in Mauchline, and the said Garvis Hamilton.

Her
Elizabeth E P Paton
mark
James Smith—Witness
Garvis Hamilton—Witness

Elizabeth Paton was a servant-girl of Burns's mother. The child grew up, was married, and died in 1817. She bore a striking resemblance to her father, which Burns mentioned in his humorous poem "The Inventory," a jocular reply to the Surveyor of the Taxes, requiring a list of the number of horses, servants, carriages, etc. The passage alluding to little Bess is as follows:

I've nane in female servan' station,
(Lord keep me ay frae o' temptation!)
I ha'e nae wife, and that my bliss is,
An' ye have laid nae tax on missis;
An' then if kirk folks dinna clutch me,
I ken the devils dare na touch me.
Wi' weans I'm mair than weel contented,
Heav'n sent me ane mae than I wanted.
My sonsie smirking dear-bought Bess,
She stares the daddy in her face,
Enough of ought ye like but grace.
But her, my bonie sweet wee lady,
I've paid enough for her already,
An' gin ye tax her on her mither,
B' the Lord, ye'se get them a'thegither.

The releasing document was found in an old chest that belonged to Burns—he evidently kept it with care—and this chest was bought by the owner's grandfather.

Mr. Shaw's address in America has been published on both sides of the ocean, and while here it is called *The Future of Political Science in America,* over there it bears the name *The Political Madhouse in America and Nearer Home.* I wish the titles of books would *not* suffer a sea-change.

NEW BOOKS MENTIONED WITH THEIR PUBLISHERS

Those marked with an asterisk are suitable for discussion in literary clubs

*"The Book of Talbot," by Violet Clifton. Harcourt Brace. $3.50.
*"On Reading Shakespeare," by L. P. Smith. Harcourt Brace. $1.50.
*"Quaker Militant," by Albert Mordell. Houghton Mifflin. $3.50.
"English Romantic Poets," ed. James Stephens, etc. American Book Co. $3.
*"Reminiscences of W. G. Sumner," by A. G. Keller. Yale. $2.
*"The Forsyte Saga," Memorial Edition. Scribners. $3.
Dante's Divine Comedy, Italian and English. Dutton. $2.10.
*"Turns of Thought, a Group of Modern Philosophers," by George Santayana. Scribners. $1.75.
"New Illustrated Gardening Encyclopædia," ed. Sudell. Scribners. $3.75.
*"Fifty Poets," ed. by W. R. Benét. Duffield & Green. $2.50.
*"The Heart of Emerson's Essays," ed. by Bliss Perry. Houghton Mifflin. $3.
*"The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas." Harcourt Brace. $3.50.
*"Footnote to Youth," by J. G. Villa. Scribners. $2.50.
*"Meridian," by Bernice Kenyon. Scribners. $2.
*"The Church Surprising," by Penrose Fry. Harpers. $1.25.
*"Letters and the Second Diary of Pepys," ed. Howarth. Dutton. $3.
*"The Land of Sing-ing Waters," by A. M. Stephen. Toronto. Dent. $1.50.
"Brown Earth and Bunch Grass," by A. M. Stephen. Vancouver. Wrigley.
*"The Golden Treasury of Canadian Verse," ed. Stephen. Toronto. Dent. $1.50.
"Cries in the Night," by J. H. Wallis. Dutton. $2.
"Murder at Mocking House," by W. C. Brown. Lippincott. $2.
"The Doctor's First Murder," by R. Hare. Longmans. $2.
"The Tall House Mystery," by A. Fielding. Kinsey. $2.
"The Future of Political Science in America," by Bernard Shaw. Dodd, Mead. 75 cents.

CLIMACTERIC

By Helene Mullins

The bitterness that filled our youth
Is mellowed, and the golden truth
Gleams through the dissipating mist
Of error finally. The fist
Once clenched against the world is now
Relaxed, the head has learned to bow.

The riddles that oppressed our days
Are lightened when the tortuous ways
Of novelty have ceased to lure.
The joys that seemed unsound, impure,
We cherish gladly when the crass
Ideals of adolescence pass.

And O the sudden sweet surprise
In finding life has made us wise,
Instead of crushing (as we feared)
Our souls to powder when we neared
The hour of standing up alone
To face the Fate we'd made our own!

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